This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

1840.
236.

1840.

236.

THE CHURCH OF ROME EXAMINED:

OR,

CAN I EVER ENTER THE CHURCH OF ROME,

SO LONG AS

I BELIEVE THE WHOLE BIBLE?

A QUESTION SUBMITTED TO THE CONSCIENCE OF EVERY CHRISTIAN READER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF THE

REV. C. MALAN, D.D.,

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH OF TESTIMONY, GENEVA,

BY THE REV. JOHN CORMACK, D.D.

MINISTER OF STOW.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

LONDON:

JAMES NISBET AND CO. BERNERS STREET;

J. JOHNSTONE, EDINBURGH; WILLIAM COLLINS, GLASGOW;

W. CURRY, & CO. DUBLIN; AND M'COMB, BELFAST.

1840.

236.

EDINBURGH:
Printed by Balfour and Jack, Niddry Street.

CONTENTS.

Page

Author's Preface, ... 23
Idea and Plan of the Work, ... 29
Examination of the Question, ... 35
Preliminaries. Exposition of the principal points of the Church of Rome's Doctrines, ... 39

FIRST ASPECT.

THE REVELATION OF SALVATION, OR THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, ... 41
I. Authority of Scripture, ... ib.
II. Apocryphal Books, ... 46
III. Traditions, ... 48
IV. The Vulgate, ... 51
V. Versions of the Bible in the Vulgar Tongue—Reading of the Bible by the People, ... 53

SECOND ASPECT.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF SALVATION, OR THE CHURCH UPON EARTH, ... 59
THE CHURCH, ... ib.
I. The Church of Rome's Unity of Faith, . . 63

Page

VARIATIONS, ... 66
1. On the Rule of Faith, ... 71
2. On the Infallibility and Permanence of the Romish Church, ... 74
VARIATIONS of Councils, ... 76
VARIATIONS of Popes, ... 77
II. Antiquity, Permanence, and Catholicity of the Romish Church, ... 85
THE POPE, ... 91
1. Primacy of St. Peter, ... 93
2. Episcopacy of St. Peter at Rome, . . . 99
3. Succession of St. Peter, ... 101
ANTICHRIST, ... 102
WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH OF ROME, . . . 106

First Visit.

Prayers and Singing in Latin, ... 107

Second Visit.

I. The Eucharist, ... 112
II. Transubstantiation, ... 118
III. The Mass, ... 126

Third Visit.

BAPTISM, and the *five Ordinances*, which the Church of Rome likewise calls *Sacraments*,—*Confirmation*,—*Penance*,—*Extreme Unction*,—*Holy Orders*,—*Marriage*, ... 145

Fourth Visit.

Worship of the Virgin Mary, saints, angels, images, and relics, ... 151
I. The Pilgrimage of Einsiedlen, . . . ib.
II. Adoration of the Image of the Virgin, . 154
PANEGYRIC ON THE VIRGIN, ... ib.
I. Immaculate Conception, ... 162
II. Assumption, ... 163

Page

ANSWER OF ZUINGLIUS TO THE PANEGYRIC ON THE VIRGIN, ... 167
Worship of Images, ... 169
THE SECOND COMMANDMENT OF THE LAW OF GOD, 171
The TENTH COMMANDMENT, ... 173
Intercession of the Virgin, of Angels, and of Saints, 175

THIRD ASPECT.

THE POSSESSION OF SALVATION, OR THE PEACE OF GOD AND HOLINESS, ... 181
Reclamations of all ages against the Church of Rome, on *free salvation*, ... ib.
HOW CAN I POSSESS SALVATION? 187
The Romish Church teaches *the merit* of works.—VARIATIONS—Sentiments of the Fathers of the Apostolical Church, and also of several Doctors of the Romish Church, ... 188
Doctrine of Scripture on *free salvation* by faith alone, 191
The Church of Rome denies *Election*, . . . 194
ASSURANCE OF SALVATION, ... 197
VARIATIONS—Sentiments of the Apostolical Church, 198
FINAL PERSEVERANCE, ... 201
Sentiments of the Romish Church on these points, 204
PENANCE, ... 207
Expiation of Sins by the Sacrifice of the Saviour. . 210
The Church of Rome virtually denies the Divinity of the Son of God, ... 212
Which the Council of Trent also does, ... 213
1. *Auricular Confession*, ... 214
VARIATIONS—Sentiments of the Fathers, . . . 218
2. *Absolution*, ... 219

Page
PURGATORY AND INDULGENCES, . . . 223
The Old Curate, ... ib.
His Conversion, ... 243
His Study of the Bible, ... ib.
The Images broken down, . . . ib.
CONCLUSION, ... 244

THE TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

In the history of controversy, this work stands alone. The author does not put himself forth in the attitude of a champion, and throw down the gauntlet of defiance. On his part there is no challenge, no threat, no aggressive movement; nay, not even a complaint. Of all these things, however, there is abundance, but it all comes from the other side.

He is challenged, as he *historically* tells us in his preface, and is peremptorily called upon to enter the Church of Rome, for reasons pretended to be drawn from his own writings; and amounting, as is affirmed, to his having already substantially avowed, and acquiesced in all that is essential to her doctrines. This he acknowledges to be a grave matter, and owns

that it ought to be gravely considered. The requisition evidently involves consequences of such deep import, that it must neither be hastily acquiesced in, nor hastily set aside. What seems fair, accordingly, in every respect, is this: to examine the reasons, on which the requisition is founded, and to act according to the conclusions, logically deduced from a fair investigation of the subject; and as both you, the Church of Rome, says he, and I, the person challenged, may be considered as interested, and, therefore, biassed parties, let us choose an umpire between us, and let that umpire be the conscience of the reader. Whatever may have been his former leanings, prejudices, or preconceptions, I inquire not. All that I ask, is simply that he shall have the one quality of *reader*, and as such shall (with *unfettered mind* certainly,) peruse the evidence now to be laid before him.

Such is the pervading idea, according to which the work is constructed. The investigation is exhibited in detail, and the results are here presented to the *reader*, who is, ever and anon, called upon to judge of the soundness of the intermediate conclusions, as well as the summation of them all in the ultimate one; and if any thing be so much as hinted at,

which might lead him to demur, he is required to call upon his *conscience*, as the *juror*, to give its solemn verdict.

The whole work is pervaded by reasoning, which is its leading characteristic. But the reasoning, as well as the manner of it, are all of their own kind. The reasoning is clear as the light of day, and so palpable and plain, that it can be, as it were, seen, touched, and felt. There are no bewildering metaphysics, cold, deep, dark, and weary on their way, with dimness and doubt, brooding over the conclusions, in which they terminate. Bible truths and historical facts, with the reader's conscience, presiding as judge, constitute the whole machinery, as well as plan and form of the work.

The facts will, at first, at least, appear differently to different minds. While to candid and untrammelled inquirers, they will appear in all the brightness and beauty of irresistible truth, dissipating doubts, and shedding a halo of light and glory on the pilgrim's path; to others, nursed in error, and having the avenues to light and truth shut up and sealed, the very same facts may seem hard and harsh, repulsive and revolting. Being, however, the facts of history, they must be dragged forth into the light of

day, and there do their work both on the inquiring author, and his reader, whose conscience is called upon to examine and decide.

In accordance with all this, and as a peculiarity of this work, it is to be observed, that here, we have no harsh epithets in default of strong reasoning, no hard names to prop weak arguments, and no savour of the *odium theologicum*, that well-won reproach of controversial writings.

This work presents another peculiarity. The usual effect of controversy is to rouse indignation, hatred, wrath, and contempt of an opponent; and on the other side, pride, presumption, self-conceit, self-righteousness, and self-exaltation. Here we have the opposite of all this. The author appears as an humble inquirer, with the Book of God in his hand, to illuminate his path, and guide his steps; while he extends the feeling and the name of *neighbour* to him who puts forth the challenge, as in all charity, kindly intended.

Again, it may be confidently affirmed, that no one can read this little work with candour, without having his knowledge enlarged, both in the facts of history, and in the truths of the gospel, while, at the same time, he is humbled in his own eyes, and ex-

cited to thankfulness for the precious Volume of inspiration, and prompted to pity and pray for the erring, in the spirit of that Christian charity, which estimates the salvation of one immortal soul above a whole world's earthly treasure.

In regard of the Translator's part in the present publication, and his undertaking the task, a word or two may be permitted. About a year ago, the original was brought to him from Paris, with a number of other interesting French publications, on the state of religion in that region of moral desolation. Amid the many ever-recurring duties of a large parish, he was contented with reading the title of Dr. Malan's work, till at length, in one of those idle hours, which will occasionally come to all men, he took up the book, to see how, in a page or two, its execution corresponded with the high idea he had previously formed of the author. The result was his being chained down in interest and delight, till he had perused the whole; and then the wish naturally arose, that, at a time, when such a work was so peculiarly needed, his countrymen might be put in possession of what had yielded to himself so much pleasure and profit. Hence it was that he undertook the translation, which

has afforded him not a few hours of pleasing occupation.

As to the execution of his undertaking as a Translator, it has been his endeavour to make Dr. Malan deliver his sentiments in English, without any indication of his knowing another tongue. But although this has been the aim, it is by no means affirmed that a French *idiom* has never found its way into the version.

In the Scriptural quotations, which appropriately abound in the following sheets, our authorised English version has been preferred to the French, both as better in itself, and more familiar to the English reader. It may be proper also to state here, that although the Translator may be disposed sometimes to view a text somewhat differently from his author, yet the differences are never such as to affect the argument, and therefore to trouble the reader with them, would be injudicious and unprofitable.

It may be satisfactory to the reader farther to know, that the present translation appears with Dr. Malan's consent and concurrence. In the prospect of publishing, I wrote to the venerable author, requesting any suggestions, he might see occasion to

make regarding his own work; and particularly requesting answers to some queries, which I proposed, regarding the position and prospects of Popery and religion generally on the Continent, and especially, within his own more immediate range of observation. The views and statements contained in his letter of 27th November 1839, are entirely confirmatory of anticipations, which I had been led to form in consequence of an extensive and lengthened correspondence from various parts of the Continent, and particularly throughout France and the Italian States. These last, present to us a peculiarly interesting aspect in the present times, in regard to the state of civil and religious liberty, and the reciprocal influence of the one upon the other, together with various coming events, which, for some time, have been casting their shadows before them.

As results and conclusions, and not the details and particulars, from which they are deduced, are all that can be presented in these prefatory pages, it may be summarily stated, that in Italy the Papal power is tottering to its base. As a secular power, it is held in universal abhorrence on account of its cruel tyranny and unmitigated despotism, even by the devoted dupes of its spiritual delusions, as well as others.

The Duke of Modena is the only Italian prince, it is believed, who permits any revenue, more or less, to find its way to the Roman coffers. The Grand Duke of Tuscany, who, in our familiar phrase, is "at daggers drawing" with the Pope, prohibits his Bishops and others from sending any contribution to Rome under pain of forfeiting their whole incomes. A few weeks ago, a splendid papal display terminated in the Pope's reading a protest against the king of Sardinia for acting a similiar part. So it has come to this; that the dread power, whose frown caused the mighty men of the earth to tremble, and whose menace shook thrones and dominions to their foundations, while the possessor of that dread power planted his foot on the necks of kings and emperors, has become that impotent thing, that is reduced to the reading of a bit of paper—the scorn of all whom it concerns,—as the whole of its warlike array. The pride and the presumption remain, but the power is gone.

While despotism, both civil and spiritual, is the well-known characteristic of the papal power, arbitrary rule is the distinctive mark of all the Italian governments. The administration differs according to the disposition of the individual rulers; but the

principle is in all the same. The extreme of despotic sway is at Rome, and the Duchy of Modena holds the next place in tyranny; while in Tuscany, the manner in which the Grand Duke exercises his power, reminds us of Sesostris, and the somewhat golden age of the fabled shepherd kings. He is the patron of agriculture, of manufactures, and of the fine and useful arts. He is indeed the father of his people, and is loved and venerated by them, as were his father and grandfather, with filial affection. He is often to be seen among them hearing and deciding causes, without even the presence of a minister. A consequence of all this is, that the stranger, on entering his territories, is struck with the flourishing aspect of all around him, while the cheerful and industrious inhabitants seem to be a different and superior race of men.

We must here find room for one illustration of what has been said. In September last there was an assemblage of learned men at Pisa, similar to our "British Association." For the encouragement of so laudable an object, the Grand Duke provided accommodation for 600 men of science from all quarters. The Pope prohibited passports to be given to any of his subjects, who might desire to resort thither,

while the Duke of Modena, with a slight difference in form, acted substantially the same part. The reason of all this was well understood to be the terror of any feeling of freedom finding its way among the subjects of despots, through intercourse with enlightened men, who, in their own lands, had the happiness of living under constitutional governments.

Civil despotism, or absolute and arbitrary rule, in so far as the persons and property of men are concerned, has been always known throughout the whole history of mankind. But to put an arrest upon the outgoings of mind, to chain down thought, and to damn a man for a doubt, were reserved for the papal power, whose unmitigated and unmodified thraldom extends to the soul as well as the body, and to the world to come, as well as the present. Her seat is in darkness, and she knows her very existence depends on the exclusion of all light, intellectual, moral, and political. This, however, is now felt by that power herself to be no longer possible, even in Italy. There is an impetus given to the love of knowledge and the desire of education, on which not even the papal power can place an arrest; and the opinion is general, that the generation now rising will see that power laid in the dust. In this felt impotency, however,

her adherents, and particularly her officials, derive encouragement, from what they *imagine* they see in other quarters. As an instance, I may mention that a few weeks ago, a priest of superior learning and talent, travelling with my correspondent, boastfully pointed to England, as all their own. The position was met by a decided negative; but the priest proceeded to exhibit what he held to be incontestible evidence of its truth. And what was this evidence? In substance it was, that "those who are at the helm of affairs in Great Britain, are all Roman Catholics; and so zealous that they do not hide their predilections;—so much so, indeed, that they distinctly encourage the Church of Rome to the prejudice of the Established Church of the land, of which they are the constitutional guardians;—that in consequence of all this, the great majority of British subjects have renounced Protestantism; and that in a short time, the whole of them will be within the pale of '*la nostra santa Madre*'—our holy mother church."

All attempts to disabuse the mind of the priest were in vain. He always recurred to what he called the "*facts of the case.*" To show his thoroughgoing in the principles of his Church, he said, that were he a Sovereign, he would prohibit all public an-

nouncements of the news of the day; and strongly reprobated the Grand Duke of Tuscany for the indulgence in this respect, which he allowed to his subjects.

But I must remember that I am writing a preface, and not a book, and so come to the one great point, and that is, *what will be the result of the overthrow of the papacy through the instrumentality of education?*

Many in these lands, I doubt not, and these, it may be, some of the holiest and best of our people, may have no doubt about the result. In exultation and triumph, they are ready to exclaim, give us the downfal of the papal power, and the victory is won. Truth, Bible truth, and Bible righteousness will arise and sweep away popish error, and the immorality which popish error propagates and fosters. Yes, truth and righteousness will arise in their place and bless the land!

It is painful to check or damp such sweet and pleasing hopes; but the love of truth and righteousness demands it. Look to past events, still fresh in the recollection of some of us, and look to the events of the present day in many lands. Look to France, at its revolution of 1789, and the scenes of horror that character-

ised it. It was education that brought about the fall both of the monarch and the Papal Church in that land. But what came in place of the false religion then exploded? Atheism, with all its horrors, was the substitute. And how came education to produce these baleful effects? Because it was an education not only without Bible principle, but in opposition to it. And one of the means by which the infidel and atheistic philosophers of France accomplished the direful work, was by identifying Christianity with the Church of Rome. Once emancipated from the soul-enslaving dogma, that he who doubts, or inquires, is damned, little was required to demonstrate the base and revolting abominations of the popish superstition. But this superstition was all that was known, in France, as Christianity, and, therefore, the doom that was so well merited by the one, fell most unmeritedly on the other.

Here, then, is something at once to direct and darken our anticipations regarding the fall of the papal power in Italy. For there, too, Christianity is identified with Popery. General education advances, and may, at no distant day, overturn the papal throne. But what is to come in its place?

Our distinguished missionary, Dr. Duff, has told

us of analogous results in India. When we have reached the point, at which the Hindoo casts off his Hindooism as a tissue of false and irrational absurdities, we are apt to congratulate ourselves, as if all were safe. But no. Having shaken off the only thing ever regarded as religion, and in which the mind was early nurtured, its first and natural spring seems to be, not to seek solace in a system of truth, but to abandon all, and to take refuge,—ah! what a word is refuge for it—in *atheism*. Such is the testimony of that distinguished philosopher and Christian missionary.

What are we to do, then, with these facts before us? Are we to allow Popery and Hindooism to remain, as in impregnable fortresses, unassailed; and that lest something still worse should be the result? No, never. We are to drive out error by introducing, or thrusting in truth as the instrument of its expulsion. This is what Dr. Duff and other missionaries in India are doing, and we have reason to bless God for their success. This was the instrumentality which, by the blessing of God, at the era of the Reformation, laid Popery prostrate in our beloved land, and spread, with unexampled rapidity, the truth as it is in Jesus, and the felicity that flows from

it. And we know that it is by "the Spirit of God's mouth," even the inspired Word, (2 Thes. ii. 10,) that the fore-doomed papal power is finally to fall, and righteousness and truth to occupy its place.

What, then, is our duty? It is manifest. It is to *promote education on Bible principles*. The *whole Bible*,—not scraps and extracts, with mutilated translations, and these garnished with popish notes, to poison any little of truth that may be presented, as in the case of the Irish system of national education, whose severest condemnation is, that it is *approved by the Pope*.—No, *the whole Bible* must be in the hands of every child capable of reading it, and must be *daily read*. It was the Bible, as a *school book*, scorned as the practice is by infidel philosophy, that trained the youth of Scotland in the days of her brightest moral strength and beauty.

The farther to stimulate our exertions in extending education on pure Bible principles, and in sacredly guarding its purity in our own land, as well as to take off, in some measure, the chilling effect naturally produced by some previous remarks; we may refer to the "religious awakening at Kishnaghur, in the north of Bengal," an interesting account of which, by the Rev. Dr. Duff, is to be found in the

Home and Foreign Missionary Record of our Church, for October last, and to which the reader is referred. We must here be contented with merely alluding to some of the leading facts. "In 1838, the leading men, in ten villages, belonging to the sect alluded to," 'Karta Bhoja,' or 'worshippers of the Creator,' "avowed their belief in the Gospel, and were baptised into the faith of Christ." Early in 1839, inquirers became multiplied, so that, at length, about 500 families, consisting of about 3000 souls, were disposed to offer themselves for baptism. It is but justice to add, that these rich fruits were gathered, and are being gathered, by missionaries of the Church of England. As to the progressive agencies in this transition from heathenism to Christianity, we are left, in a great measure, to conjecture. "But this is very certain," says Dr. Duff, "that, as far back as *forty years ago*, Dr. Carey, Dr. Marshman, and other Serampore missionaries, again and again visited these districts, and preached the gospel, with strong hopes of its being, at no distant period, embraced by all those sects, who, having already renounced idolatry and caste, seemed not far from the kingdom of heaven." The good seed may sometimes lie long under the soil without any promise of vegetation, and yet,

at length, yield an abundant harvest. Let us be guided by the precept, "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." (Eccl. xi. 6.)

In conclusion, I must be satisfied with a mere reference to the noble and successful resistance made by the Canton of Zurich in Switzerland, to the appointment of a Dr. Strauss to the chair of doctrinal theology and church history in their university, a person who, in his "Life of Jesus," leaves nothing for belief but allegories and fables. "The peasants," (I again quote from the Missionary Record, Nov.) "have preserved in their families the precious books of the Reformation, consequently, the faith continues to be maintained amongst them, while it has departed from the academies." For three days they suspended their labours from noon, and met in their villages, comparing the doctrines of Strauss with those of the gospel. It is to be remarked, that the appointment, now cancelled, was by a *Board of Education*. Means have been adopted for securing the interests of evangelical truth. All this should powerfully prompt us to secure the purity of Bible

principle in the instruction of youth. Even when seemingly dormant, those principles may spring up and bear fruit. And let us beware of *Boards of Education*, which seem to have originated in a scheme of Bible expulsion.

WHILE the above has been passing through the press, I have received answers to specific inquiries, of which I shall here set down the substance, and generally in my correspondent's own words. I am happy to think, that, upon the whole, the prospect is encouraging, and calculated powerfully to impress upon us all, the imperative duty, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do," in Bible education, "do it with thy might."

"I have not seen," says my correspondent, "so much infidelity among the young men in Italy as in France; and in both countries, I believe, the tide is turned. Deep and bitter curses, I have heard uttered, against the Pope and the priestly pack of Rome, by men of all ranks; but along with this, I have heard the most respectful language regarding the Christian religion. They say, 'it is

not our religion, or theirs that is bad, but the ministers of it.'

"Protestantism is not in existence among the Italians, and those from whom I would have expected more sense, look upon '*the schism of England*' with pity and horror, deploring that the act of Henry VIII. should have inflicted such a curse on our nation. Books, giving a HISTORY of what they call 'the schism of England,' are to be seen in all the stalls,—a garbled and lying narrative. It is, however, far more the *name*, than the *tenets* of Protestantism that terrify the Italians. Were freedom of speech to be no longer a crime, and were some such man as John Knox to arise, I am strongly inclined to believe, that he would, in a few years, enlist a goodly band under him. Till the political condition of Italy, however, is changed, none dare to assume the name of Protestant. In Venice, the Protestant service is performed alternately in Italian and German; but not one of the congregation is found to be an Italian. It consists chiefly of Swiss, French, and English; and the Italian language is used, because understood by them all. My informant on this point was a Swiss Protestant, in whose house I generally spent my evenings, while in Venice."

Then follows a horrid picture of the more than semi-barbarism of Italy, the result of popery, among the lower orders, theft and pocket-picking, mingled with seeming devotion *at mass*—assassination and murder, are counted slight matters, while the most common surgical cases in hospitals, Bologna, for instance, are those of wounds inflicted by *stabbing*.

"In conclusion," it is added, "I would only remark, that Italy,—(even the Roman States,)—is becoming daily more civilized—that religion is venerated more from ignorance, than from knowledge—and that only politically is it hated by the masses. Protestantism is only known beyond the Alps, as the creed of the strangers. In France, I am persuaded that the doctrines of the Reformation are spreading. In this city of Marseilles," (from which my correspondent writes, 25th December 1839,) "there are seven thousand Protestants, ministered to by four pastors. Had I had space, I would have said much more of Italy; for much struck me as interesting in the present state of that people,—rising in spite of all obstacles."

I have reluctantly suppressed much that I consider interesting, that I might not be tedious, though, as it is, I may appear so to the indifferent. Here,

however, are materials for thinking; but of what use is thinking, if it issue not in action? "We are fallen upon evil times." Be then the watchword, —"UP AND DOING."

Popish priests, from Italy to Ireland, are exulting in the favour shewn them by the ministry of Protestant Britain, who, they are fully convinced, are aiming a "heavy blow and sore discouragement to Protestantism," the maintenance of which is the very condition, that placed the present Royal Family upon the throne of these realms. Will they allow this another day to pass uncontradicted;—not by *words*, but by *deeds?*

Shall *Popery* hold up her front unabashed? Shall *atheism*, under the name of Socialism, stalk forth, undaunted over Scotland's sacred soil, consecrated to the Redeemer by the blood of the martyrs, whose spirits are now before the throne?—Forbid it God of our Fathers!—Forbid it every British heart and hand!

MANSE OF STOW, *Jan.* 1840.

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

CHRISTIAN READER,—The question here put to you, whether you can enter the Romish Church so long as you believe the whole Bible, is addressed to your conscience, and awaits its decision.

I never thought of putting the question. Being descended from one of those ancient families of primitive Christians, who preserved, from the first ages of the apostolical church, the deposit of the Word of God, pure and uncontaminated, I never recognized either the doctrines, or the authority of the Romish Mystery; and numbering among my ancestors a Bible Martyr, a pious handmaid of the Lord Jesus, who preferred being buried alive to acknowledging the Pope and his doctrines, I never so much as formed the idea, not merely of entering again into the Romish Church—since my family had never proceeded from it—but even of approaching it, and, above all, of having any intimate connection with it.

In these circumstances, however, a publication appears, of which the following is the title: "Doctor Malan, Protestant minister at Geneva, led by the necessary consequences of his principles, to embrace the Catholic religion;" and it is in these formal terms, with as much urgency as gravity, that the author summons me before God, and, in the name of truth and charity, most earnestly to "recognize the Romish Church as my mother, and with tender affection to cast myself into her arms."

The arguments, it is true, which are brought forward in this work, are merely those which have been again and again exhibited for the last three centuries; but with regard to myself personally, they are invested with this special character, on which they endeavour to rest their claim, that I have publicly taught and defended the eternal divinity of the Lord Jesus.

These are the principles which the author specifically charges home upon myself; and his argumentation proceeds as follows:

I. The Lord Jesus Christ, as God blessed for ever, both in his qualities as Supreme Teacher, Legislator, and Pastor, has established on earth a Church, in which he has placed, 1st, The unity of faith in a certain number of articles which he hath taught us; 2d, A rule of faith common to all believers; 3d, This rule of faith is infallible; 4th, The perpetuity of this unity and infallibility.

II. Now, these four characters, which are those of

the true Church of Jesus Christ, are found only in the Church of Rome!

III. Therefore, Dr. Malan, recognizing Jesus Christ as God, and as the Sovereign Teacher, Legislator, and Pastor, is bound by this principle to recognize also the church, which is essentially the result of these four qualities of the Son of God, and that Church is the Romish Church.

This conclusion is correct, and I acknowledge that I ought to submit to it, if it be true that the Romish Church unites in herself the four characters of the true Church of Christ; and also that she really obeys the Son of God, as God manifest in the flesh, as the Sovereign Teacher, the Sovereign Lawgiver, and the Sovereign Pastor of the Church.

It is the second assertion in this reasoning, (the minor of the syllogism), that I must examine, with all the attention and gravity which such a subject demands. I must ascertain, whether it be a matter of fact, that the Church of Rome, such as she at present exists, is, without all doubt, in possession of the four distinctive marks in question; and to do this, it is necessary for me to compare what she is with the immutable word of the Lord Jesus, and so to imitate the believers of the city of Berea, whose nobleness* is praised by the Holy Spirit, because they duly searched the Scriptures, to see if what the

* Οὗτοι δὲ ἦσαν εὐγενέστεροι. κ.τ.λ (Acts xvii. 11.)

apostles announced to them were conformable to the divine word.

I am under no apprehension of being told, that "I am unable to understand the sense of the Word of God with sufficient accuracy, so as to decide according to it what the Romish Church is," since the Bereans, whose example I mean to follow, were able to do it, and that too in regard of the teaching of the apostles; and since, moreover, it shall be my special care to quote the Word with perfect accuracy, and, when it appears requisite, to produce the original text, that every candid reader may be as able as myself to judge whether these things be so.*

I proceed, then, reader, conscientiously to investigate the question proposed. I shall do it in a few words, both that I may not fatigue you, and that I may not give a repetition of the voluminous and learned works which abound on this subject; and farther, that you may be in a capacity to ascertain the degree of interest, which you yourself take in this matter, I may farther say, that, in this investigation, I shall neither mention the publication, that has been addressed to me, nor the sentiments of its author, with the exception of a single passage, which imputes to me an error in doctrine. It is as follows:

Speaking of the Lord Jesus, as our Teacher, the writers says, in his second chapter: "This Heavenly

* Εἰ ἐχοι ταῦτα ὁυτως. Acts xvii. 11.

Master was condemned to death for having borne authentic testimony to the union of the divine and human nature in his own person; and he was raised again, that he might, by indisputable miracle, confirm all the truths, which he had announced to men," (page 9). The author afterwards expresses himself in these words: "All that I have said in this chapter on the divine qualities of Jesus Christ, contains doctrine on which the creed of Dr. Malan and myself is in perfect accordance," (page 12.)

I repel this assertion. What the author affirms of the Saviour's death, is, in my eyes, quite co-incident, in an essential point, with the doctrine of Socinus, who saw in the sacrifice of the Son of God merely a martyr of opinion, and in his resurrection simply a confirmation of testimony. My creed is perfectly different, and I express it thus: "The Saviour died to expiate for ever the sins of the Church; and he rose again, by the glory of the Father, for the complete and perfect justification of the elect."

This is what the Word says, and it is what I believe. I am not, then, in this respect, of the same creed as the author I have quoted, and I repel absolutely his allegation.

Let this single remark, then, Christian reader, suffice regarding the publication of which I have spoken. It is neither with it nor the writer that I ought at present to concern myself; but simply with

the truth which I must contemplate and investigate; and it is that alone, also, which I am desirous to place before you.

May the Lord Jesus assist me in this work, and may his Spirit of light, of wisdom, and of power, bend and turn to his glory all our thoughts and all our feelings!

C. MALAN, D.D.

GENEVA, *le Pré-Béni*,
21. *February* 1838.

CAN I EVER ENTER THE CHURCH OF ROME, &c.?

IDEA AND PLAN OF THE WORK.

Yes, the salvation of my soul,—that is indeed a serious thing! "It is an indispensable thing, and the only thing that is indispensable," exclaimed eloquent lips.* It is indispensable, because I cannot do without salvation; and "it is the only thing indispensable, because, except salvation, there is nothing but I can do without."

What will it profit a man to gain the whole world, if he lose his own soul; and what shall he then be able to give "for his ransom?" says the Lord to me.†

It is absolutely necessary, then, that my soul be

* Bourdaloue, Pensées.

† Matt. xvi. 26. "Ἀντάλλαγμα τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτου;"

saved, that is, that it go to God, that it enter heaven, and that it enjoy beatitude there. But who shall point out the way to it? Shall I find it by myself, in my own wisdom, or by my own virtues? Alas! being by nature mere weakness, ignorance, and sin, what light shall I make to arise out of my darkness?

Shall I ask other men to point out the path to me?—But what are they but poor sinners, as weak, as ignorant, and as miserable as I myself am? What do they know, more than I, that I should follow their directions?

It is to God, then, that my soul must address itself for instruction in the way to heaven. His voice has spoken to men and his word is written. "I will hear what his mouth hath spoken," and I will believe it with my whole heart; for "his testimony is sure, and in him there is no darkness at all."* It is Jesus who speaks this word to me,—Jesus, who "is the Way and the Truth and the Life. No one cometh unto the Father but by him." "In him is life eternal, which is the gift of the grace of God." "God has so loved the world, that he has given his only Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."†

* Ps. lxxxv. 9; cxix. 138. John xxi. 24. 1 John i. 5.

† John xiv. 6. Rom. vi. 23. *χάρισμα τοῦ Θεοῦ ζωὴ αἰώνιος ἐν* X. I. John iii. 16.

Such, also, is my faith. Yes, through the mercy extended to me, I have believed the testimony of God. I believe in Jesus Christ; I adore him, and my soul is subjected to him. I am a Christian,—that is to say, I know that "I am justified by faith; that I have peace with God; that even now I possess eternal life; that nothing shall tear me out of my Saviour's hands; and that his Spirit has sealed me to the day of redemption."*

How great, then, is my joy! "He in whom I have believed is able to keep that which I have committed unto him," until the day of his appearing and his kingdom; and it is on the straight and beautiful path of sanctification, in the practice of good works, wrought in me by his Spirit, that he leads me, as by his hand, and under the view of his love,† giving me the assured hope of the glory and the felicity of his heaven, on which I enter, on leaving this world. Oh! what a belief! Oh! what promises! And it is more than twenty years, that they have been my precious and unfailing portion!!

In the meantime, however, it is to me, a Christian, so happy, that men of gravity and more than ordinary piety say, and that over and over again, both in their letters and publications, "that I am

* Rom. vi. 1. John v. 24; vi. 47; x. 28. Eph. i. 13, 14.

† 2 Tim. i. 12; iv. 1. Eph. ii 10. Psal. lxxiii. 23, 24; xxxiii 18.

deceiving myself in regard of my faith; that this peace of which I speak is a fatal security; that, as to my salvation, there is nothing less sure; that it is in the Church of Rome, and there only, that I can find it; and that, therefore, I ought to hasten to throw myself into the bosom of that Church, that there my soul, having escaped its illusion, may find rest."

Blessed illusion, may I well reply, which, giving us the assurance of the everlasting love of God, teaches us to love him in return, to fear him, and turn us from evil! Yes, blessed is that illusion, which renews and purifies the heart, which shows it the ugliness of sin, and the unutterable beauty of Jesus, which, detaching the soul from worldly vanity, draws it continually with more and more decided propensity to heaven, by imparting to it, and that increasingly every day, a foretaste of its own beatitude! Oh! that such an illusion, as my faith is named, were the portion of many souls, and more especially of many families! It is mine, and I can say, with all my household, that "the lines are fallen to us in pleasant places, and that we have a very goodly heritage."*

May it please God, then, to grant it to all those also who pity me, and may the illusion, (whose proper name is assurance,) which the Holy Spirit nourishes

* Psalm xvi 6.

in my soul, be made known to them also, and yet more powerfully than to myself! No, my love for them cannot wish for them a surer happiness.

But, in fine, it is from love also that these Christians, (for such they call themselves,) urge me to listen to their counsels, assuring me, that if, laying aside every prejudice, I agree to see the Romish Church, such as she is, I cannot fail to detect my error, and immediatly abjure it, in order to unite myself in that Church to the genuine children of God. What ought I to do, then, in the case of such a summons as this? Were I not to reply to it at all, would not this, on the one hand, seem to be treating with contempt the charity of my neighbour; and, on the other, to be turning away from an investigation, which, if conducted in the fear of God, cannot fail to be profitable to my faith?

To this demand, then, made upon my moral rectitude, I yield; and leaving every debate, and every answer to men's writing, and every allusion of every kind, I shall enter upon this examination in a direct manner, ascertaining, with as much care, and, at the same time, with as much brevity as possible, whether the creed of the Romish Church be in fact preferable to my own; that is to say, whether it be more conformable to the infallible word of the Lord.

Here, then, is what I am to do. After calling to mind the leading articles of the Romish creed, I shall meet them in succession with what is written in

the book of God; and, at every step of my progress, I shall ask myself, on my conscience, and as I shall wish to have done it, at the great day of judgment, whether I can, or cannot believe, what that Church believes.

May the Lord grant his benediction on this investigation, and make it finally redound to his glory!

EXAMINATION OF THE QUESTION.

PRELIMINARIES.

EXPOSITION OF THE PRINCIPAL DOCTRINAL POINTS OF THE ROMISH CHURCH.

In entering upon this investigation, I feel interest in turning my thoughts back to the time, in which the apostle Paul, addressing the Church of Rome, said, that he "gave thanks to God on her behalf, that her faith was spoken of throughout the whole world."* At that time every thing in her was "according to the mind of Christ."† Simplicity, separation from the world, abundance of the gifts of the Spirit, charity, brotherly love, kindness, support, submission to the word, and many other virtues, formed her lovely character, which shone with increasing brightness in her, and "the God of peace likewise bruised Satan under the feet" of this obedient Church.‡

* Rom. i. 8. † 1 Cor. ii. 16.
‡ Rom. xv. 5—7; xvi. 19, 20.

At that time, accordingly, (as a modern historian of that same Church remarks, in reference to the description given by Minutius Felix, in the second century, of the doctrines, worship, and morals of the Christians of his time,) at that time, at Rome, "the temples, the altars, the statues, were no longer used; and near to its source, Christianity limited itself to evangelical spirituality, and had not yet admitted those practices, addressed to the senses, with which the first Christians reproached paganism, and which their successors have since adopted." "When one has read," adds he, "the work of Minutius Felix, and those of the fathers of the Church, or of the other Christians who wrote before, or during the time of Constantine, one is struck with the great difference which exists between Christianity in its infancy, and Christianity in its old age, and one may well say, "Oh! how different is it at this day from what it once was!"*

Yes, say I too, but with a prophet of Israel, "How is the gold become dim, and the fine gold changed!"† How is this very Church, so jealous in ancient times of "preserving the doctrines which she had learned,"‡ reached such a jumbling of her own thoughts with the oracles of God, that these last are, in her case, set aside and reduced to silence! Oh!

* O quantum, heu! mutatus ab illo! (Dict. Univ. Historiq. Critiq. et Bibliogr. 1810, tome xi. p. 561.)

† Lament. iv. 1. ‡ Rom. xvi. 17, 19

Church of Rome! why does the man who contemplates thee, see in thee, along with the creeds which the first martyrs sealed with their blood, so many doctrines and practices, which, if imputed to them, they would have condemned with horror?

I ought also carefully to distinguish the universal, or catholic doctrines of the Church of Rome, from the particular doctrines, which she has added to them, and too often substituted for them. By the first, the Church of Rome still holds by the orthodox universal church, at least in so far as profession is concerned; and in this she is catholic, as forming part of the universal church of Christ—the Church of all times and of all places. But by the second order of doctrines, I mean those peculiar to herself, she in fact becomes particular. She separates herself from the body of the Catholic Church, and so tears herself, by her own deed, so long as she retains them, from that spiritual bundle, so to speak, which by the word and by the Holy Spirit, is united to the first ages, the flourishing churches of Antioch, of Alexandria, of Constantinople, of Carthage, of Rome, of Spain, and of the Gauls; and which in our own days also, are, by the same word of truth, and the same spirit of faith and love, collected together in one, according to the Saviour's prayer,* all the churches, which hold for doctrines only what the Scriptures

* John xvii. 2.

teach, and for usages only what the apostles practised. Now, this double character of the Church of Rome, which, in the ninth century, Agobard, archbishop of Lyons, already pointed out, while he distinguished between the ancient church and that of modern date,* well explains how in that same Church are found souls submitted to the righteousness of God which is in Jesus Christ,† while so many others are seen remaining absolute strangers both to the knowledge of salvation and the grace of God; the former, as a Pascal, for instance, discerning the ancient truths of the faith, direct the whole of their belief to them; while the others, the carnal, the ignorant, the mass of the people, are moved or interested only by the human and earthly doctrines, and by practices addressed to the senses, to which they limit both their knowledge and their inclination.

It will be easy to prove, by the exposition which is to follow, where the ancient faith of the Romish Church differs from the novelties in her creed, with as much distinctness as the brightness of a mid-day sun surpasses the lurid light of a few exhausted lamps about to be extinguished in darkness.

* Neotericos Romanos et Antiquos. (Oper. p. i. p. 119.) Spanheim, Elenchus, p. 37.

† Rom. iii. 22; x. 3.

DOCTRINES OF THE ROMISH CHURCH.

These are the truths believed, as set forth in the holy Scriptures, and which are avowed by that Church, which professes the creed called that of the apostles, and that of Nice, or Athanasius, which are so well known, as to require no farther notice here. But I have said that the Romish Church professes to receive them; for I ask myself in all sincerity of heart, if it be possible that a soul, taught by the Holy Spirit, and in complete submission to the apostolical truths contained in the two creeds already named, can admit, by the same Spirit, the particular tenets of belief which I am to examine. My reason, as well as my conscience and my faith, rejects the admission; and I cannot but feel surprise that there should be minds both enlightened and honest, that can imagine the existence of concord between things that are so much at variance.

That the generality of members of the Romish Church do so, and that without any scruple, is a thing that I comprehend. It is but rarely, perhaps, that the most cultivated among them ever think of examining their own creed; and with respect to the people, alas! it is enough to repeat what I read in the "Abridgment of their Catechism:" "I believe in my pastor (or curate), because he teaches the doc-

trine of the whole Church, for he teaches the doctrine of our bishop, who is in communion with the Pope and the whole Church."*

I do not sit in judgment on those who pursue such a course as this; but as for myself, who will not trust my soul except to God only, I wish to weigh in the balance of his word the peculiar doctrines of the Church into which I am asked to enter; and as it is my salvation that is at stake, I am going to ascertain what it is that these doctrines promise me on this important subject, which I shall consider under three views or aspects.

I. The Revelation of Salvation, or the Holy Scriptures.

II. The Administration of Salvation, or the Church on Earth.

III. The Possession of Salvation, or the Peace of God, and Holiness.

* Abrégé du Catéchisme pour les jeunes gens que l'on dispose à la première communion. Geneve, 1832, p. 71.

FIRST ASPECT.

THE REVELATION OF SALVATION, OR THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

In entering on the subject, then, What does the Church of Rome tell me regarding the WORD OF GOD —regarding those Holy Scriptures, in which the Most High hath consigned to us the testimony of his infinite love, in the revelation of his people's salvation, and which are the voice of his own truth?

I. AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE.

"You will never be able to know," replies the Church of Rome to me, "whether that word be the word of God, but in so far as I, the Catholic, apostolical, and Roman Church shall have declared it to you."*

Have I heard aright?—What! God hindered from speaking directly to his own creature, of making communications of himself, through his word, to my understanding, or to my heart, till a society of

* Conc. Trid. sess. iv. Eckius, De Author. Eccl. resp. 3. Pighius, Assert. de Hier. Eccl. cap. 2. Bellarmin, De Verbo Dei, lib. iii. cap. 10.

men agree to it! "Certainly," it is replied; "the Church is more ancient than Scripture, and it is her authority alone that gives credibility to the word of God,* which, without the authority of the Church," says a cardinal, "has no more value than Esop's Fables.†

Variations.

What pretensions! What dogmatical assertion! What a heavy yoke of authority! But let us wait a little: for I hear several voices of antiquity holding very different language to me. In fact, reader, think not that because the Romish Church glories in her unity of doctrine, that she is always uniform. No; numerous variations reproduce themselves in her—we shall gradually see some of them.

First of all, the apostolical fathers, on whom this Church loves to lean, deny her here their assistance.

In the second century, I hear the Doctor, Clement of Alexandria, tell me, that "the Holy Scripture is a light and a truth, which engrave on the heart what cannot be written." In the third century, the bishop Cyprian reminds me that the word of God illuminates by its own native light the soul that was blind and dead in darkness. In the fourth century, bishop Athanasius says, that the oracles of

* Eckius et Pighius, apud Scharpium, Curs. Theol. p. 54.

† Cardinal Hosius, Legate of Pope Pius IV. at the Council of Trent. (B. Pictet. Theol. tome i. p. 94.)

God are sufficient for the revelation of truth. Ambrose, bishop of Milan, exhorts me to believe, but not to sit in judgment on divine things. and to drink out of the two cups of the Old and New Testament. Every upright heart, says bishop Augustine to me, may know the eternal law of God, but he is forbidden to be its judge. The truth gives life; the end and object of all the Scriptures is the soul. It is not human wisdom, adds Chrysostom, it is God's revelation itself, that is necessary for the understanding of Scripture; and bishop Salvian, with his habitual elegance, declares, that, if the words of man have need of attestation, the Word of God gives testimony for itself; for it cannot otherwise be than that whatever the incorruptible truth affirms, should be itself the incorruptible witness of that truth.*

So speak the fathers; and not less positively do the Doctors of the Romish Church also, contradict their Church. "The Catholic truths," so teaches the celebrated monk Biel, "are in their own nature of unchangeable truth, without any regard to the approbation of the Church." And the learned Jesuit, Canisius, pronounces these words, which are all to the glory of God: "As for ourselves, we believe the

* Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. i. Cypr. de Orat. Dominica. Athan. Orat. cont. gent. Ambr. De Fide, i. 5. Chrysost. Homil. 21, on Genesis. August. contra Faust. ii. 5. Salv. De Provid. iii. apud Scharp. p. 62.

Scripture, and cling to it, and ascribe all authority to it, because of the testimony of the Holy Spirit, who speaks in it."*

All these words are good and wise, and I listen to them, and I wish to adhere to them, because I see that they are in accordance with the word of God, which says concerning itself, that "it is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and that it pierces even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit;" that it is a "light," and a "fire," and that it is "by it that the Spirit of the Father regenerates souls, gives them life and instructs them."†

Now tell me, reader, whether the prophets, or the Lord Jesus, or the apostles, when they gave forth the word of God, had need, as St. Paul says, "of letters of commendation?"‡ The same efficacy, which cleft the waters of the Red Sea, or which made a river spring up from the rock of Horeb, which healed the sick, which calmed the tempests, which gave sight to the blind, and hearing to the deaf, which raised the dead to life, without needing the approbation of the priests or of the synagogue—has it not always had, and will it not always have, the same power of God, the power of making dead souls live, of touching

* Biel, Mag. Sent. iii. 25. Canisius, Catech. de Præcep. Eccl. 16. apud Scharp. p. 63.

† Heb. iv. 12. Psal. xix. 6, 7, 9; cxix. 130. James i. 18. John vi. 45, &c.

‡ 2 Cor. iii. 1.

hearts, of revealing Jesus Christ in them, and of filling them with peace and joy? I should like exceedingly to know, by what authority the peasant, who reads the Bible, or the savage, who hears it read or preached, is moved, is laid hold of, and transformed in his whole being; and how he becomes an entirely new man? Is it, perhaps, because the Council of Trent, because the Romish Church, has told them, that this book, which they read or hear, is of God, and that they *ought* to be affected by it? or rather, is it not because that is done for those souls, which was formerly done for Lydia, "the seller of purple, whose heart the Lord opened, that she might understand what the apostle Paul said to her?"* Yes, saith God, that is the cause.

This is the reason, reader, why I set myself on the Lord's side, persisting in the belief, that "the authority of the Holy Scripture resides in itself by the Holy Spirit, and not in the authority of the Church;" and that while the apostle Paul said to the Corinthians, "I speak unto you as unto wise men, judge ye what I say," he was exhorting them to do what the Bereans also had done, and who had been commended for doing it, as we have already seen.†

* Acts xvi. 14. See Semailles Evángéliques, p. 10. Un Pauvre valet de ferme, &c.

† 1 Cor. x. 15. Acts xvii. 11.

II. Apocryphal books.

But let us hear what the Church of Rome tells me, moreover, about the Apocryphal Books, and the use of them. These are very surprising things, reader, and deserve the most serious examination.

"The apocryphal books," she declares to me, "are divine, and you shall receive them as such, or be anathematized;"* that is to say, a cursed one! What; shall I be cursed and damned, if I admit not as divine, books, which I cannot approve without destroying every sentiment of truth, of wisdom, and of the fear of the Lord? To what extremity am I reduced!

Variations.

But I receive consolation from another quarter, and it is again the Fathers, and then ancient Doctors of the Church of Rome, that furnish me with it.

Melito, bishop of Sardis, who had visited all the Eastern churches, tells me that not one of them ever received the apocryphal books. Origen, Hilarius, Athanasius, Cyrillus of Jerusalem, Epiphanius, Gregory Nazianzen, Jerome, and many other bishops and Doctors reject them with one consent.† And no

* Conc. Trid. Sess. iv. Bellarmin, De Verbo Dei, i. 7, 8, 9, &c.

† Horne's Introduction to the Critical Study of the Scriptures, 1821, vol. i. p. 708.

more does the Council of Laodicea admit them. In fact, this became the voice of the whole Church.* In Africa, Augustine tells us, that they are only read as inferior books and as devoid of authority. And with respect to other Romish Doctors, the two Cardinals, Cajetan and Ximenes, and with them all the Doctors of Alcala, and Thomas Aquinas, and Nicholas Lyranus, and Pagninus, and many others, exclude them from the Bibles which they print or expound.†

Such is the testimony given by these Fathers, and these Doctors, and also by a General Council. And it is correct. For in fine, how should books which the Jewish Church, "to whom were committed the oracles of God,"‡ would never recognise, and which were not written till after the prophetical epoch, and in a language different from that of the holy books;—books, in short, which neither the Lord Jesus, nor the apostles ever so much as once quoted; books, moreover, in which are found falsehood, opposition to the books of Moses, sorcery, vanity, ridiculous fables, and many contradictions; how should such books be held as divine, and rationally regarded as the language of the Spirit of truth, of wisdom, and of holiness?

* Conc. Laodic. 59, c. Quoniam. Dist. 16. held in 364. It was approved by the General Council of Constantinople in 681.

† Caj. Comm. in hist. O. T. in fine Reliqui libri, &c. Matt. Poole, a Dialogue, &c. 1735, p. 60, and 61.

‡ Rom. iii. 2.

Upon me, then, fall the anathema of Rome, since, in order to escape it, I must attribute to my God, to the Eternal himself, writings which I, a poor sinner, would blush to have composed. Judge, reader, ought I to enter the Church of Rome at such a price?

III. Traditions.

But this is not all, in so far as the Bible is concerned. Let us listen farther.

"The Holy Scripture is insufficient," the Church of Rome tells me, "and the traditions must make it complete. The Scripture is obscure, and it belongs to the Church to fix the sense of it. The Scripture is addressed only to the clergy. No versions of it, therefore, are to be made into the vulgar languages, and the people must not read it but by permission."*

The oracles of God insufficient! The light of the Holy Spirit obscure! The everlasting gospel, communicated in a single language, and the people, (that is to say, the human race!) forbidden to read freely and always, the good tidings of salvation!! Reader, do not these things look very like blasphemies?

* Bellarm. de Verbo Dei, lib. ii. 15; iii. 3; iv. 3, 4. Conc. Trid. sess. iv. Alph. a Castro, contra hæreses, i. 4. Bossuet, Exposition, 18, 19. Molanus, Theol. Pract. lib. iii. c. 27.

Variations.

Now, however, what reclamations arise against this strange doctrine?

The fathers, both Greek and Latin, have but one unanimous voice to utter on the subject, and that they utter here, and at once, to affirm that we must not add to the Scripture either other books or traditions.

The Scriptures are perfect, says Irenæus, for they are the words of God, dictated by his Spirit.* "I adore the plenitude of the Scriptures," says Tertullian, "and I will admit nothing without their testimony."† "The holy books inspired by God," says Athanasius, "are sufficient for the acquirement of the whole truth."‡ "It is a public renouncement of the faith, a criminal arrogance," exclaims Basil, "to reject any thing of Scripture, or to add to it what is not written."‖ "It is a work of the devil," says Theophilus of Alexandria, "to imagine any thing divine beyond the holy and sovereign Scriptures."§ "Tell me not," says Augustin, "of the authority of such or such a council. It is to the

* Irenæus, iii. c. 1, et 47.
† Tert. contra Herm. De Carne Chr.
‡ Athan. Orat. cont. gentes. ‖ Lib. de Confess. Fidei.
§ In 2 Pasch.

authority of the canonical books that I submit, and to nothing else."*

And to such decisions of the fathers, what do the Romish Doctors themselves add? Scotus, that celebrated Doctor, declares, that he limits his theology to the revealed will of God, which is sufficient, and which contains the whole doctrine, of which man in his pilgrim state on earth has any need." "The canon of Scripture of itself is sufficient, and more than sufficient," says N. de Lyra; "and respecting the things which Jesus Christ has not seen fit to reveal, no one has any right to form a conjecture."†

What a stroke of the axe at the very root of the traditions! And it is the fathers that strike the blow; yes, those very bishops and Doctors, whom it is the delight of the Romish Church to make her prop and stay; and they are aided by Romish Doctors, who join altogether in saying with the book of God, "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it." "Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar;" and lest, like the Pharisees, in keeping the traditions of the elders, thou receive this condemnation, "In vain do they honour

* De Doctr. Chr. ii. 9. contra Max. Ar. iii. 14. De Nat. et Gr. 61.

† Duns Scotus, Prol. Sent. 9, 3. Lyran, Libelli, 2.

me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."*

And what do these Fathers and Doctors say farther, regarding this pretended obscurity of the Scripture, regarding its interpretation by the Church, regarding the danger of translating it into the vulgar tongues, and regarding our duty of refusing it to the people? You shall hear them by and bye, reader, and you shall see whether it be possible to refute their testimony.

IV. The vulgate.

But allow me first of all to remind you, that there is a Latin translation of the sacred books, called the Vulgate, which the Council of Trent has declared to be alone authentic;† that is to say, that it alone is permitted to be used in the Romish Church, which allows it more authority than even the inspired text in Hebrew and Greek.

This version, which was made by Jerome in the fourth century, was altered. In the sixteenth century Pope Sixtus Quintus caused it to be restored; and it was under his eye that there was printed at Rome an edition, which that Pope pronounced to be pure and authentic, and which he enjoined the whole Church to receive as such.

* Deut. iv. 2 Prov. xxx. 5, 6. Mark vii. 7.

† Conc. Trid. sess. iv.

But in spite of all this care, and particularly in spite of the infallibility of the Pope, this edition was found to be so faulty, that Clement VIII., the successor of Sixtus Quintus, suppressed it, and caused another to be published in 1592. But this last was neither more correct, nor more pure than the former. On the contrary, there are found such contradictions between these two versions, and both the one and the other contain such numerous and grave errors, that it is impossible to have confidence in them, or to determine between them what is the true import of the text. This, however, is that Bible which constitutes the sacred text to the Church of Rome! Such is the production which she prefers even to the revelation of the Holy Spirit! Such is the thing which the Romish Church commands me to receive, (and that under the doom of an anathema!) in preference to the Hebrew and Greek texts, which the Lord himself hath inspired! And it is to induce me to do this, that I am told of it . . . . fables; as for instance, that all the manuscripts, whether Hebrew or Greek, have been altered, either by the Jews, the enemies of Christianity, or by the Greeks, the enemies of the Latin Church!

But if this Vulgate be in reality superior to the originals, may I be permitted to ask how it is that Jerome himself has said, in more than one of his letters, that "the Hebrew and Greek texts are as much preferable to his version, as the fountain is to

the stream that flows from it." How is it that Ambrose, Augustin, and even Gratian, in the twelfth century, insist upon "the necessity of verifying the Scriptures, by the Hebrew and Greek texts;" and how is it that Bellarmin himself is forced to be of the same opinion?* "As for myself, I declare that I do not feel myself possessed of sufficient courage to prefer to the very words of Isaiah, of David, or of St. John, those of the very best translators; and if I thereby draw down upon myself the anathema of the Council of Trent . . ." Reader, ought I to fear it?

V. Versions of the Scripture in the vulgar tongue. Reading of the Bible by the people.

In this also I submit myself, whether I ought to approve what the Church of Rome is going farther to say on this head also.

"It is neither necessary nor useful," she declares, "that the Holy Scripture should be translated into the vulgar tongues; and it is not suitable nor convenient that it should be read by any but the clergy."† And is it indeed the Church of God, is it indeed the Spouse of Jesus Christ, is it indeed the assembly of the saints, that holds this language? And have I

* Aug. canon locutio, dist. 3. De Civ. Dei. xv. 13. De Doctr. Chr. ii. 12. Ambr. De Spir. Sancto, ii. 6. Hieron, contr. Helvid. Epist. ad Sun. et Fretel. Epist. ad Marcel. Comm. in Zach. viii. &c. apud. Scharp. p. 30.

† Bellarm. De Verbo Deo. lib. ii. 15. Conc. Trid. iv.

not stated what she says elsewhere, that "it is a heresy to say that the Bible ought to be read in the language of the people?"* And in another place, "We deny that the people ought to study the Scripture; it is even much more suitable to prevent them doing it,"† &c.

And why, I have asked, would you wish me, a poor artizan, a labourer, a mechanic, or a soldier, who never learned, and do not understand Latin, to be deprived of the word of my God? Or if I be a Hungarian, for example, and the Latin my mother tongue, why would you not wish me to nourish my soul with it, and my whole family along with me?

"Because the people," such is the answer given me, "cannot understand it. The Scripture is obscure; it is profound and mysterious, and if every one were to read, and explain it as he understands it, what a confusion of different opinions would soon be seen in the Church! Let it suffice the people, then, that the priests teach it. They have no need of any other knowledge for their happiness, and the peace of the Church is the more secure."

Variations.

But, I am permitted to reply, if this be so, why does the bishop of Cesarea, the pious Basil, say the

* Sandetus, lib. vii. Visib. Monarch, (Scharp. p. 35)

† Molanus, Lovan Doctor theol. lib. de pract. theol. tr. iii. c. 27. concl. 2. Hosius, de Sacro vern. legendo.

contrary, when he writes, "that it is right and necessary that every one learn in the inspired Scriptures of God, what is useful for growth in godliness, and not to follow human traditions."[1]

Why does the Archbishop Chrysostom exclaim, "I entreat you, men of the people, to get the Holy Bible, which is the medicine of the soul, and at the very least, to get a New Testament."[2]

Why did Jerome, also, the very author of the Vulgate, translate the Bible into the language of Dalmatia, his native country?[3]

Why did the Council of Nice (pray attend to this!) order, "that no Christian house should be without a Bible?"

Why did Bishop Ulphilas, who was himself present at that Council, translate the Bible into the language of the Goths?[5]

Why, also, does the venerable Bede affirm, that in his time, the Bible was read in five different languages, in the British Islands?[6]

And finally, why again do Jerome, Chrysostom, and Augustine, speak as they do? The first says, that

[1] Regulæ Brev. Resp. 95. See the interesting pamphlet entitled, "Les Voix des Anciens aux hommes du dix-neuvième siècle; ou Lisez le Livre." Paris, 1835.

[2] Homil. 9, on the Epist. to the Colossians.

[3] Hosius, De Sacro Vernacule Legendo. (Apud Sch

[4] Corn. Agg. De Vanitate Scientiar. (Ibid.)

[5] Socrat. lib. iv. 33. [6] Histor. lib. i. c. 1.

"the laity should abound in the knowledge of sacred literature." The second, "that the people, and particularly mothers with their children, ought to attend to the Apostles' injunction, which is, to read the Bible with the greatest care." And the last, "that by the wisdom of God, it has come to pass, that the Scripture, at first in one single language, is multiplied into an infinity of languages and dialects, that it might be every where diffused, and that men might come to the faith of God, through the medium of the language in which they are accustomed to speak."[1]

Here is what I have asked, and as no answer is returned, and as I am reminded, but in an under voice, of that bull of one of the last Popes, which has proscribed Bible Societies, and which has called forth the multiplied prohibitions of Archbishops and Bishops against the dissemination of the sacred books among the people: prohibitions which, in different places, have forced priests to burn many copies of the Bible, and even a Romish version. As I was told this, I have hazarded a farther question, and I have said,—

"Why does the Church of Rome, in regard of the reading of the Bible by the people, do precisely the contrary of that which the Lord commands?" For

[1] Hieron. Comm. in Epist. ad Colos. iii. 16, et Psal. lxxxvi. Chrys. Hom. 9, sur les Col. Idem. Hom. 3, Sur Lazare. Aug. De Doctr. Chr. ii. 5.

in fact, said I, it is God himself who put forth the order in addressing all the people, and not solely the clergy of Israel.

"Ye shall lay up these my words in your heart, and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thine house, and upon thy gates."[1]

Is it not, also, the same gracious God and Father who pronounces a benediction, not on the clergy only, but upon every man who "takes his pleasure in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on it day and night?"[2] Is it not he, also, who says to the people, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life?" Is it not, also, for the people, that it is written, that "the things which are in the book of God are there written for our instruction;" that we ought to be all "armed with the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;" that "the word of Christ should dwell in us richly;" that "from his childhood Timothy knew the Holy Scriptures;" and that we ought to "desire the sincere, or pure milk of the word of God," with the same avidity that "the little in-

[1] Deut. xi. 18—20; vi. 6—8. [2] Ps. i. 2. John, v. 39.

fant seeks the bosom of its mother," in order that by this nourishment we may "grow; and that we may bear the fruits of righteousness to the glory of God."[1]

Is it not to the people, that all these words and benedictions are addressed? Are they not, then, addressed to me, who am of the people, of the lowest of the people, but who, though mere refuse and off-scourings in the eyes of men, have yet a soul to be saved?

Why, then, does the Church of Rome, at the very moment that she asks me to come into her bosom, require me to renounce the reading of the book of God? Does she not see that I press it to my heart, and that I cannot do without it? And yet she wishes me to give it up!

Alas! what would become of me, if I were deprived of the word of the Lord? What becomes of the multitudes who have it not, and never had it? "Behold them," says the Scripture, "in the darkness of the shadow of death," or prostrated before wood and stone, or slaves of infamous superstitions, or the idolatry of a false prophet, or cursing Christ and perishing far from him. And what, also, is the lot of those people, named Christians, it is true, but from whom the word of God is withheld? What kind of faith have they? What is the nature of their piety,

[1] 1 Cor. x. 11. Eph. vi. 17. Col. iii. 16. 2 Tim. iii. 15. 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2. Phil. i. 11.

of their fear of the Lord, of their love to their neighbours, of their moral purity, of their resemblance to Jesus Christ, of their preparation for eternity?

And yet it is wished that I should reduce myself to this, and my family also! No, no! Never, never! God has given me his Bible. Who shall take it from me?

Reader! am I wrong in speaking thus?

SECOND ASPECT.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF SALVATION, OR THE CHURCH UPON EARTH.

But I must now hasten toward the essential point of my examination; and here it is before my eyes.

THE CHURCH.

The Church of Jesus Christ on earth, this is my important subject. Here it is that, in the presence of God, I must listen with the greatest care to what the Catholic, Apostolical, and Romish Church, is going to say to me, in order to demonstrate to me that she alone is that Church of Christ; that it is to her that the administration of salvation has been confided by

"the Chief Shepherd and Bishop of souls," the Lord Jesus.[1]

This, as I have already said, is the solemn subject, and whoever treats it as a light matter, despises his own soul, and endangers its ruin. It is not without reason, then, that in a season of religious awakening, such as that in which we have been for some years, reflecting minds search and inform themselves on this great point, and that the question, Am I, or am I not, in the true Church of Jesus Christ? should arouse and engross them.

Unhappy is that man (be he Protestant or Papist,) who maintains indifference in this, holding on in that passive deed of impressions, and continuing in it, because he has always been in it.

It is the truth which saves, and the truth is not two, but one. The Word of God is the truth, and all belief which it does not teach, God condemns.[2] Perish, then, the foolish, as well as impious adage, "Every religion is good, if it be followed." This maxim (pray attend to it!) is nothing else than a lie, which the Lord Jesus, the faithful and true witness, puts to confusion, when he says, "It is I who am the Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me. He who hath not the Son of God, shall not see life."[3]

[1] 1 Pet. ii. 25; v. 4.

[2] John xvii. 17. Gal. i. 8, 9. Is. viii. 16.

[3] Rev. iii. 14. John xiv. 6; iii. 36. 1 John v. 12.

Now, it is in His Church, and not elsewhere, that the Lord Jesus has placed that truth which alone imparts life to the soul; and, moreover, it is not in an equivocal, changeful, or fading manner that he has done it.

Jesus is God. In him, therefore, knowledge, wisdom, power, and love, are all unchangeable. All that he hath done, he hath done by himself, and for his unfading glory; and the manifestation of his work among men, is merely the evidence of his sovereign and immutable decrees.

The Church of the Saviour, therefore, is a Church of God: that is to say, a Church which is one, certain, (or infallible,) and permanent, as God himself, in the truth, which is its basis, its substance, and its place! and that through the efficacy of the Holy Spirit, who is in her, and will never leave her.

To suppose another Church, is to suppose another Jesus,—a Jesus who would not be God,—a false Christ,—and consequently a false Church. This Church of God, then, has these two characters: the one, that she believes and teaches, that Jesus Christ is God manifested in the flesh; the other, that through the Holy Ghost, she reproduces the image of Jesus her Head,[1] in the unity, the certainty, and the per-

[1] I use the word *Head* rather than *Chief*, because the word in the text (κεφαλη) signifies *the head*, in relation *to the body*; while, in relation to us, the word *chief* rather signifies *prince* or *leader*.

manency of her doctrine, of her obedience, and of her duration.

Such is the true Church, "the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth, and against which the gates of hell shall not prevail."[1] I must be of this Church, then, since the Most High hath declared, that out of her there is certainly nothing but condemnation. "For," said God, "there is no salvation in any other name, than the name of Jesus."[2] I ask, then, is the Church of Rome that Church of God? Is she the Church? Is it to her exclusively that is entrusted the ministration of salvation?

UNITY, INFALLIBILITY, AND PERMANENCE OF THE CHURCH OF ROME.

"THE Church of Rome,"—this is the answer given me,—"is the only Church, that is one, infallible, and permanent. As she is the most ancient Church, so is she the mother and sovereign of the whole Church of Christ, being founded on the Apostle St. Peter himself, who bequeathed and transmitted his apostolical authority to the successive bishops of Rome."[3]

[1] 1 Tim. iii. 15. [2] Acts iv. 12.

[3] Exposition de la Doctrine de l'Eglise Catholique, passim. Abrégé du Catéchisme, &c., id. Bellarm. De Eccl. iii. 10, 11, &c.; iv. 8. De Rom. Pontif. iv. 4.

I have said it already, reader; if this be so, I must have no more hesitation; for my unquestionable duty is to obey the King of the Church; and consequently to vanquish all the repugnance, which certain doctrines, certain practices, certain acts, nay, which numerous errors even may occasion in my mind. All these inconveniences are nothing, in comparison of the essential thing, which is to recognize the true Church, and to be a member of it, that I may be saved. For if I be hungry, I must, to avoid starvation, take the bread which God gives me, though it were presented to me by a diseased or mutilated hand, or in an unclean vessel.

Let us see then, as clearly as possible, whether the testimony, which the Church of Rome gives of herself, be indeed true in the presence of the Lord.

I. Unity of faith in the Church of Rome.

But in entering upon this topic, be careful to observe, reader, that unity by itself alone, however perfect and well sustained it be, and whatever be the number of minds which it holds together, cannot be an absolute proof of the truth. Thus, we can admit that unity of design, and perhaps the most perfect, is maintained and perpetuated among the spiritual wickedness of which the Scripture speaks, and of which Satan is called the Prince.[1] We might remark,

[1] Jude, 6. Eph. ii. 1; vi. 12.

also, that their unity is very ancient, and that it cannot be changed with any variation either in its nature or agency. And yet who would plead, from this single character, for the maintenance of the rights of devils? Who would say that the powers of the air are of God, because they have but one will; but one single and only propensity, and that always the same?

Certainly, at least, in a kingdom of this world, nobody would think of saying that a conspiracy, because ably arranged, and conducted with uniform consistency, had a right, because of its unity, to call itself legitimate, and to declare to the citizens who continue faithful to the laws, that they do not form a part of the people of the realm, because there happen to be some differences of opinion among them.

In the same way, then, supposing the Church of Rome were really one in its principles and its progress, however consistent and prolonged this character might be, she would have no right, by this single fact, to say to the Protestants, for instance, that she is the Church of God, because she is one, and that they do not belong to it, if there exist differences of opinion among them. The Protestants might always reply to her; if yours be a unity in error, but our variations are on the truth; our condition is better than yours, for you are in a unity of darkness, while we differ merely as to degrees of light.

It is, then, on the nature of the tie, that that of the

unity, which constitutes the tie, depends; and surely the Church of Rome dare not pretend to any other unity, but that which the divine tie forms; that is to say, than to the unity, which the Word and Spirit of Christ produce and maintain in that Church, which is bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, and which is perfect in beauty.[1]

So, when the Scripture speaks of the unity of the Church, it is always in reference to her intimate union with the Lord, and which is that of the body with the head—of the wife with her husband—of the branches with the stem—and of the building with the corner stone; a union of which the Saviour paints all the depth, the power, and the duration, when he asks the Father in his intercessory prayer, that "all his redeemed might be one, as the Father and the Son are one."[2]

It is from his union, then, this marriage, which the Holy Spirit forms between the Heavenly Bridegroom and the Church, that the Church's unity of the faith proceeds, and it is by it also that it is maintained. If two souls are in Christ, they assuredly have one faith and one hope, one and the same only Lord, one only baptism, and one only Father.[3] In

[1] Gen. ii. 23. Eph. v. 30, 32. Cant. Ps. l. 2.

[2] John xvii. 21. The original text says, Ἵνα πάντες ἓν ὦσι, that is to say, one only and same existence; one only and single thing.

[3] Eph. iv. 4–6.

regard of one another, they are as members of the same body; and through the Holy Spirit there is a perfect unity between them. Augment the number, so that instead of two souls there shall be a thousand, ten thousand, and many more who believe in Christ. The fulness of the Saviour is then as sufficient for these thousands as it was for the two; and the same spirit still binds together in unity this multitude of believers.

This is the everlasting Church, the spiritual and living Church. This is the spouse of the Son of God. These are the chosen of the Father, whom the Holy Spirit has regenerated, who are justified by faith, and to whom alone the heavenly inheritance belongs.

But this Divine Church is known by God alone.[1] She remains invisible to the eyes of men, who can pretty correctly conjecture that it is she, according to the fruits of the Spirit who is in her, but who can never fix her limits, nor draw a boundary line around her without error.

Now it is to that Church, and to her alone, that unity belongs; I speak of the unity which proceeds from Christ. She cannot be supposed to be without it, since the Saviour has said to his children that they are one in him. Nor any more can it be supposed, that this unity exists out of her, since the

[1] 2 Tim. ii. 19.

Saviour has said, "Without, or out of me, ye can do nothing;" and that "he who has not the Spirit of Christ, does not belong to him;" but that "he scatters abroad instead of gathering.[1]

I must conclude, then, that the unity of the Church of Jesus Christ is in Jesus, and in him alone. If the Romish Church, then, speak of unity, it must be of that which is in Christ; since all other unity, so far from being a divine characteristic, would be the very opposite, and more deplorable still than the unity of Mohamedism, and Brahminism, in as much as the sin would be aggravated by greater light.

It is true, that in the subject which I am at present examining, the question is especially concerning the Church which is still on earth, the Church assembled in a visible body; that is to say, the Church of the called, and not that of the elected alone. We must expect then to find in her, and, first of all, in her unity of faith, all the imperfection resulting from the very circumstances of her coming together out of the world, while yet in the midst of it.

But in spite of all this inevitable weakness, she will always bear the seal of her union with Christ, and will exhibit it in her unity. Yes, though she may have her faults and her falls, she will never fail to manifest the two principles of her being in Christ, and which are the power of the Word, and the Spirit

[1] John xv. 5. Rom. viii. 9. Matt. xii. 30.

of the Lord Jesus. For Jesus is God. Let us never lose sight of this immoveable foundation. He does not hold communication with man, therefore, in any other way than as God has always done it; I mean by his Word and by his Spirit. Whatever, then, while on earth, be the constitution which he may have given to his Church, and under whatever form he may have confirmed it by the seal of its unity, it is always by the Word that he has done it, through the efficacy of his Spirit; for it is by these means and never by any other, that he regenerates and justifies souls; that he unites them among themselves, that he feeds them, that he sanctifies them, that he gives them the victory over the world, over death and hell, and that he finally bestows salvation upon them in his eternal kingdom. The whole of Scripture sets this clearly before us.

From all this, I again conclude, that in the unity of the Romish Church, I ought to see Christ, that is to say, his word and Spirit, and to see them in a uniform and connected way.

If, then, these two elements are not found in that Church; and so the word of the Lord Jesus and his Spirit are not manifested in power, I shall not hesitate to say that no more is Jesus God, than that it is a false Jesus that is exhibited, and that all that is done and repeated there, were it always one and the same from the most ancient time downwards, is merely a deceitful work, and the more melancholy,

that it has the appearance of that of the Lord, and that it has continued so long. No, reader, "Jesus does not deny himself." He accordingly has not desired that his "Church, which is the fulness of Him, who filleth all in all," should have any other unity than that of her Lord, and which is that of the truth of God and the life of God.[1]

What shall I say, then, to the Church of Rome, if I see her devoid of that divine unity? What value shall I then attach to all that she can tell me about her antiquity, about her authority, about the succession of her leaders, and about her infallibility? In my judgment all these characters shall be "thrown out in the way of never receiving them;" since, after the absence of divine unity, they become nothing more than those, which a false church may possess in common with idolatrous religions.

I resume my first argument, then, by this question:—"Is it the truth as it is in Jesus,[2] which constitutes the unity of the Romish Church?"

VARIATIONS.

Now, if it were the truth which is in Jesus, that formed this unity, and if Jesus, in point of fact, had specially confided it to her, would not this be in a way that was certain, invariable, and in harmony with

[1] 2 Tim. ii. 13. Eph. i. 23. [2] Eph. iv. 21.

the very character of the Sovereign Teacher, who is God?

Instead of this, what is it that the Church of Rome presents to me in the whole continuance of her history, from the period when secular power and grandeur seduced her, so that she became a kingdom of this world?

Surely if the "Eagle of Meaux," as he is called, could manage to make volumes on five variations of the Protestant Church, and of which not one impinged upon the first rule of faith; is it only on so small a number also, or is it on a multitude, that there have been written the "History of the Variations of the Gallican Church," and the "History of the Church?"[1]

Let one take the trouble of following the acts of the Romish Church from the sixth or seventh century to the seventeenth, and see if there exists a history more abounding than it is, in changes, in non-sequiturs, in contradictions, in formal and decided oppositions to the Word of Christ, to the rule of faith of God's Church.

It is not in secret that all this has passed: why then should I refuse to be instructed in the matter, and why should I receive mechanically this assertion of the Church of Rome: "I have the unity of

[1] L'Histoire des Variations par Bossuet, has its answer in these two works, the first by Rémoult, the other by Basnage.

faith?" Must I then say to all history that it is nothing but a tissue of lies?—or must I rather be constrained to show the Church of Rome that she is in an illusion, and that she is deceiving herself? For, in fine, upon my conscience, and before God, I cannot but see and understand facts; and if they demonstrate to me that nothing is a greater stranger to the Church of Rome than unity, what ought I to do? Ought I really to believe that Church on her own word? or ought I not rather to shew her her error, and turn away from her?

I. *Variations on the Rule of Faith.*

Doctors, colleges, universities, prelates, popes, and councils, multiply them, as if in emulation of one another, whether it be against Scripture itself, which they put out of the way, which they despise, which they sacrifice to human glosses, and of which they reject the doctrines; or among themselves by their oppositions and interminable quarrels.

I have already pointed out several proofs of this in my first investigation, when speaking of the authority of the Holy Scriptures. I now give some more out of a great number, and others will appear as this examination proceeds. We have seen formerly that the apostolical Fathers and Bishops of Rome had duly exalted the dignity of the Word of God, and placed on a solid foundation the principle, "That

the Word of Christ alone, and by itself, is the Rule of Faith to the Christian Church."

Variations on this soon appeared. After temporal authority came into the hands of the Popes, their decretals (that is, their letters and decrees) were joined to the Bible as the Rule of Faith, and they obtained an authority even higher than that of Scripture.[1] What divine unity!

The Apostolical Traditions also held dominion over the Book of God. "How do we know," so teaches one of the first doctors, "that the writings of Moses are his? Have we the originals? And if we had them, could we know the hand-writing of Moses? What more variable than written Scripture? Every copyist can alter it. But the traditions, transmitted from mouth to mouth, depend not on pen or parchment."[2]

By and bye, the principles of pagan Aristotle, under the name of scholastic theology, literally drove out of the Church the Holy Scriptures, of which, in public teaching, it was said "that they were useless, that the scholastics were sufficient; that in whatever language Scripture were read, it could only stir up mischief, and that it would have been better that it had never been in existence."[3] What divine unity!

[1] Buck, Theol. Dict. loco. Basnage, Hist. de l'Egl. liv. xxvii. § 2.

[2] Pighius, De Hist. Eccl. lib. i. Basnage, xxvii. 8.

[3] Basnage, xxvii. passim.

And again, what is made of the uninspired books? The Council of Laodicea and that of Constantinople, as we have seen, rejected the apocryphal books. A Council of Carthage, on the other hand, for the most part admitted them, and afterwards three Popes declared themselves for that of Carthage, while another Pope, Gregory the Great, at the head of a college of theologians, confirmed that of Laodicea, What divine unity!

But there is something more: the clandestine Council of Florence in 1439 had abrogated the ancient canon of Scripture, and recognized the apocrypha. But as Luther and the other reformers rose in might against several errors of the Romish Church,[1] and she could uphold them only by the apocryphal books, the Council of Trent received the mandate to recognize these books also as divine. Then (reader, this is important,) after keen debates, in which blows succeeded abusive language,[2] the matter was put to the vote among fifty bishops, cardinals, and deputies present; and by a majority of five voices, it was decided, "that the Holy Spirit had dictated the apocryphal books, and that they became, under pain of malediction, the rule of faith to the Church."

Thus, then, there were five of these men, whose

[1] See Histoire de la Reformation du Seizième siècle, par Merle d'Aubigné, tome ii. p. 112, &c., and p. 262, &c.

[2] Palav. Ist. del Conc. di Tr. lib. viii. c. 6.

libertine and scandalous conduct merited grave censures, and whose discussions were mixed up with buffoonery,[1] who "received from the Lord Jesus a commission to impose on the whole Christian world, a revelation different from that of God!"

Oh, how the heart revolts at such doings,—and at this pretension to unity of faith in the Romish Church! It is only by the deepest groans that we can answer it.

II. *Variations on the Infallibility and on the Permanence of the Romish Church.*

For myself, I feel that the examination I have already made is sufficient to enable me to answer by the most decided negative, this question: "Is the Church of Rome entrusted by Jesus Christ with the administration of salvation?" But meanwhile it is proper that I continue my researches to their conclusion, and that I see in what sense that Church gives herself out for infallible.

Every Christian will no doubt acknowledge that the Church of Christ possesses this character. Jesus is God, I repeat it; "in him is no darkness; all his words are truth; He is not a man, that he should lie;" and his Spouse, the Church, is such as he himself is. This is that of which a celebrated Roman

[1] Basnage, xxvii. 4.

theologian reminded the Council of Constance. "The infallible Church," said he, "is neither that of Africa, nor that of Rome, nor that of the representative Church assembled in a Council, for Councils have erred; but it is the Church of Jesus Christ spread over the whole earth."[1] This is my own opinion, and therefore I ask if the Church of Rome is really infallible?

I do not believe, replies at the very first, the president of the Council of Constance, Cardinal d'Ailly, "for a universal Council may come to a decision contrary to the law of God. The Church of Rome, separate from the assembly of the faithful, may become heretical, and the greater part both of the clergy and the people may destroy the faith."[2] No more do I believe it, replies Pic de la Mirandole, when complaining that "the Church does not know where her infallibility resides. It is not in the head of the Church, for I recollect having seen a Pope, who told his domestics, that he did not believe that there was a God; and another Pope, who denied the immortality of the soul."[3]

[1] Th. Netter. ou Waldensis, Doctr. fidei, lib. ii. a. 2, c. 19. The books of this theologian were approved by a bull of Pope Martin V. Basn. xxvii. 3.

[2] Alliæ in Quest. Vesp. a. 3. Basn. ubi supra.

[3] Picus Mir. De fide et ord. cred. Th. iv.

VARIATIONS OF COUNCILS.

"No more do we believe it," say the Councils; "for we have erred, and have reciprocally contradicted and combatted one another."

The Lord Jesus has promised, indeed, that "wherever two or three are met together in his name, he will be in the midst of them."[1] But he has said, "in my name," and the Councils usually met in a quite different name from that of Jesus Christ. So the Holy Spirit did not enter into their sessions, and error was the result.

Thus, the Council of Neocesarea, (A.D. 315), approved by Pope Leo IV., condemned second marriages, which, however, are permitted by the Word of God, 1 Cor. vii. 39.[2] The Council of Arles (452) opposing the Council of Gangres, (340), which Leo IV. had approved, forbids that a married man should be ordained a priest, contrary to the Word of God, which permits it, 1 Tim. iii. 2; Heb. xiii. 4; and contrary to the example of the apostles, and particularly of St. Peter, who had a wife, 1 Cor. ix. 5.

The second general Council, held at Constantinople, assigned the primacy to the Bishop of Rome, contrary to the decrees of the first Council of Nice, and of the Council of Carthage, which declare, "that

[1] Matt. xviii. 20. [2] Scharpius, Cursus Theol. p. 1890, &c.

no one can assume the title of Sovereign Pontiff, without sin." The Council of Chalcedon put the Bishop of Constantinople in the same rank as that of Rome. But how many Councils contradict it!

The Council of Bâle ordered the Lord's Supper to be celebrated under the two species of bread and the cup; contrary to the Council of Constance, which had forbidden it, in contempt of the Word of God, Matt. xxvi. 27; Mark xiv. 23, &c. These two Councils decided, moreover, that a Council is above the Pope: the Lateran Council has decided the contrary, &c. &c.

Where, in all this, is Jesus Christ? Where is the Holy Ghost, speaking by the Holy Scripture? Where is the unity of faith? And, above all, where is infallibility?

VARIATIONS AMONG POPES.

Finally, the Popes themselves say, that they do not believe in the infallibility of the Church of Rome. It is quite true that this Church tells them: You are infallible. You are the successors of St. Peter. It is for you that Jesus Christ prayed, while he did it for the faith of that apostle; and it is to you that he has committed the keys of the Church.

But, in spite of these assurances, the Popes persist in demonstrating, that there is nothing that less belongs to them than infallibility. In the meantime,

I see that Leo IX. (1049), and afterwards Gregory VII. (1070), published, and passed decrees through Councils, that the "Pope cannot be judged by any one; that he is the infallible judge; that the Romish Church has never erred;" and such like things. At the same time, I hear one of them, Pope Gregory XI., tell me on his death-bed, and declare, also, in his last will, that "if, in the Consistory, or Councils, or elsewhere, he has maintained any doctrine contrary to the Catholic faith, he condemns what he has done."[1] What a variation!

I see, also, a division in the Church regarding them. At the end of three centuries' duration, this infallibility, which the Church gave them, she took away from them. A schism took place: two or three Popes reigned at the same time; some at Avignon, others at Rome, or elsewhere. A Council had to put an end to this fallibility; and it began by declaring, that the Popes themselves should thenceforth be subject to its censure. It was at Pisa that this Council was held, (1510.)

The papal infallibility, then, was destroyed. It was necessary to restore it. A Lateran Council undertook the task; and, in calling Leo X. a God, having all power in heaven and on earth,[2] it cut the question; and the infallibility of the Lord Jesus

[1] Spicil. Dach. i. 6. Basnage, tome ii. p. 1598.
[2] Matt. xxviii. 18.

himself, was thus decreed to a poor, weak, and sinful man, like others.

The Council of Trent came next. There the ambassador of France declared, "that his master would not permit the Pope to be above the Council." His master! Reader! But neither the Word of God, nor the Holy Spirit. For what part had either the one or the other in such matters! The Council was undecided. On the one hand, it was afraid of this master of France, who had been mentioned to it; and, on the other, says its historian, it acted only as the subject of the Pope, its sovereign.[1] The matter remained undecided, and it does so still.

But the Word of God has decided the matter; and here is the way it has done it. The Lord Jesus, who is the Sovereign Lawgiver, and who assuredly will never leave to the power of Satan, the man whom he has established in his Church, and whom he has anointed with his Spirit; this sovereign King, "who," as he has told us, "is with his apostles," (and consequently with their successors) "even to the end of the world,"[2] has put into the unchangeable code of the laws of his Church, this word, which hath been, which is, and which will always be infallible: "A bishop, then, must be blameless, the husband of one wife,[3] vigilant, sober, of good behaviour,

[1] Palav. lib. xii. c. 15. [2] Matt. xxviii. 20.

[3] Μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα.

given to hospitality, apt to teach ; not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre ;[1] but patient, not a brawler, not covetous."[2]

Such is the character of every Bishop of the Church, intended by the Saviour, and which, to a certainty, the Holy Spirit will realize in the man whom he is to render infallible. To think otherwise would be to dishonour God, and be guilty of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost: to suppose, on the one hand, that the Sovereign Lawgiver had neglected, or forgotten, (what a term to employ!) to accomplish in his Vicar, what he desires to see in every pastor of his dear Church; and, on the other, that the Holy Spirit should invariably rest upon a man, who, in his conduct, would shake off the yoke of the King of the Church!

But, in place of this beautiful picture of him, who is holy, deputed by the Spirit of Jesus, that it might re-appear on the soul of a bishop, his servant,—what a picture is presented to me in the personal character, the morals, the creed, and the whole life of a great number of those men, who call themselves infallible, who have taken the name of St. Peter, and whom the Romish Church has declared to be in possession, at once, of the succession of an apostle, and of the abundance of the Spirit of God!!

I feel hesitation in retracing here even a few of

[1] Αἰσχροκερδῆ. [2] 1 Tim. iii. 2, 3.

the features of this frightful picture. But it must be done, reader; for it is to your conscience that I appeal, and it is not without feeling this, that you ought to reply to me.

A writer, as pious as he is eloquent, fixing his eyes on the picture, which I have before mine, exclaims:

> " Voila donc le très-saint, voila donc, l'infaillible !
> De l'Eglise de Dieu voila le chef visible !
> Qu' importe en quelle fange un pape se souilla,
> Qu'il se nomme Alexandre, et qu'il soit fourbe, avare,
> Incestueux, athée, empoisonneur, barbare,
> Et de plus Borgia ![1]

And these verses do not say too much. For, without stopping to notice the Arian heresy of a Liberius, or the exhumation of the corpse of Pope Formosus, cast into the Tiber by order of Pope Stephen VII., whom do I see in the tenth century? A Pope Sergius III. twice deposed, and a third time elected, through the intrigues of his concubine, the infamous Marozzia, who rules at Rome, and that under this pope, sunk in debauchery, and under his successors.

A little after, I see Pope John XI., son of Pope

[1] Cantique d'un Chretien sur la papauté; avec des notes, par H. F. Juillerat. Paris, 1836. See also, Chronique abrégée de la papauté, p. 354, &c. of the book entitled, L'Arsenal Spirituel. Yverdon, 1829.

Sergius III., and of the impure Marozzia, and who lived in incest with his mother. Then John XII., who turns the palace of the popes into a brothel, who addicts himself to magic, and who was deposed and banished by a Council, at which the Emperor Otho presided.

I see John XIII. or XIV., son of John XII., accused before the magistrates of the most abominable pollutions, and dying by the sword in the act of adultery. In the eleventh century, I see a Hildebrand, a Gregory VII., surpass all the bounds of pride, of obduracy, and of tyranny, take away from the pastors of the Church, the right which Jesus gives them of having a wife and children, declaring that hitherto no Pope had ever erred, and that none of them could ever do it, and ending with excommunicating and deposing an Emperor. Again, I see Victor III. having for his mistress the concubine of his predecessor, and dying by the poison which his sub-deacon had mingled in the cup of the Eucharist. In the twelfth century, I see Pascal II. exhume the body of the emperor Henry IV. which he leaves exposed on the ground of a cemetery for five whole years. In the thirteenth century, I see Adrian V., son of Innocent, IV. elected Pope without having been ordained a priest. In the fourteenth century, I see Boniface VIII., who denies the immortality of the soul, and who, accused by Philip Le Bel of heresy, of magic, of simony, of murder, and other enormi-

ties, die in despair. In the fifteenth century, I see a John XXIII. given over to dishonourable gain and avarice, and thundering his anathemas against those who ventured to say that Jesus Christ had lived in poverty. I see the abominable Borgia, Alexander VI., accumulating in his own person all possible and detestable iniquities, adultery, incest, assassination, poisoning, sins against nature, rapines, and perfidies innumerable. He had four sons, and he lived in incest with his own daughter, Lucretia, who lived in the same way with her brothers ! ! And, last of all, I see him die by the poison which he had prepared for one of his victims.

Reader, I stop here. The Word of God is vindicated. No, never did infallibility rest on such men ! Their cause is more than decided—they have set at nought the Lord—they never knew him. And, as it is written—" God gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts to dishonour their own bodies between themselves."[1]

And if, by one " of those depths of Satan," spoken of by him,—" Whose eyes are as a flame of fire,"[2] it is replied, in opposition to the evidence of these abominations, and as I myself have heard it advanced, " that the character of the Popes must be very stable, and the Church of Rome very true, since both the one and the other continue to exist, not-

[1] Rom. i. 24 [2] Rev. ii. 18, 24.

withstanding these crimes." If we are to have such reasoning, I would ask the simpletons, who thus reason, if, in Hindustan, the priests of the infamous idol Juggernaut, have not a right to hold the same language while they practise the same crimes and the same pollutions?

But I shall doubtless be told, that it is to their charge and office, and not to their persons, that infallibility attaches. Be it so! I shall forthwith examine how far those, who take refuge here, find themselves in safety? As to myself, Christian reader, I know not whether prejudice blinds me, or the habits, in which I have lived, of distrusting the pretensions of the Romish Church, obscures my intellect; but I feel that it is impossible for me, on this point, to grant her what she asks. No; I can neither recognise, nor perceive, the characters of the Lord Jesus, in the kind of unity, which the Church of Rome has shewn me; and neither her particular Doctors, nor her Councils alone, nor her Popes, separated from the Councils, nor her Councils, over which Popes have presided, can present, to my judgment, either the unity of faith, of which the Scripture speaks, or the infallibility, which the Holy Spirit gives her, and of which, both the one and the other flow from the attributes of the Lord Jesus.

Reader, see whether your opinion condemns mine.

II. Antiquity, permanence, and catholicity, of the romish church.

What again, then, will this Church tell me, in order to prove that she, and she only, is the Church of Christ? She tells me of her antiquity, of her perpetuity, and of her existence all over the world. "God is more ancient than the devil," says Bellarmin;[1] and in the parable of the field, the wheat was sown before the tares.[2] So, accordingly in the world, the Church of God, which is the good grain, existed before every other Church."

I must ingenuously confess, that whatever force this argument may have with the Church of Rome, it makes no impression on me. Nay, I cannot help saying, that it appears ludicrous. In fact, (to reply to the thing itself, and not to the figures), neither antiquity, duration, nor extent, are of themselves proofs of a divine origin. The idolatries of the Chinese are unquestionably of high antiquity. They have also existed without interruption, and they extend over the surface of a vast empire. It is also, usually on these three characters, as well as their unity, that the Lamas and the Bonzes combat Christianity.

At once they trace back their creed to Peleg,

[1] De Verbo Dei, lib. iv. c. 5. [2] Matt. xiii. 24.

grandson of Noah.[1] Moreover, regarding the magnificence of their worship, the riches of their Church, the prosperity and the number of their temples, and the worshippers who attend them, and the holiness, and infallibility, and the perpetual succession of their sovereign Pontiff, (for they use these very terms in speaking of the Grand Lama), they are certainly far above all that Gregory VII. himself could display of pomp and grandeur, since this pope was never surrounded, as the Chinese pontiff is, with 20,000 priests of every rank and dignity, who serve him, and whom the reputation of sanctity and infallibility, of the most honoured Pope of Rome never approached those ascribed to the Lama by his worshippers.

And in the meantime, I am convinced, that if one of the priests, or bishops of the Romish Church discussed the matter with one of the Bonzes or Lamas, he would refuse to conclude from this extreme antiquity, this pomp of riches, this prodigious splendour of the Grand Lama's court, and the vast domination of his authority, that his religion was the true one; and that every other, and particularly that of Rome, being less ancient, less magnificent, less admired, and, above all, less numerous, ought to humble herself before the other, and give her glory. Why then, employ in defence of truth the very arguments which are the prop of falsehood; and if the Romish Church,

[1] Gen. x. 26, 30.

such as she now is, be of God, what need has she, in order to prove it, to have recourse to the very thing which is the strength of idolaters?

The pagans and Jews also, in opposing Jesus and the apostles, boasted of the antiquity, the fixedness, and the perpetuity of their religions, and loudly rallied them on the novelty of the Gospel.[1] "What," said they, "is this new doctrine? Our fathers worshipped on this mountain. We should like to know what is this new religion, which thou preachest." I again ask, what is the use of repeating such reproaches or such pretensions?

VARIATIONS.

Ah! but the apostolical fathers are very guarded in the use of them. Though they knew, and wrote, and maintained, that the Church of Jerusalem, where St. Peter first taught; then that of Antioch, where also it is said that he taught for seven years, then that of Alexandria and that of Constantinople, were some of them more ancient, and others of the same date as that of Rome, still they spoke of the antiquity of their duration only in such terms as these: "The pagans," says some of them, "boast of their antiquity; as if antiquity, or ancient custom, could add any thing to the value of truth! But it is the

[1] Mark i. 27. John iv. 20. Acts xvii. 19.

devil's way of doing to recommend a system or deceit under the pretext of its antiquity."[1] And what says Cyprian? "It is not by the duration of time that the authority of religion is measured."[2] And what say Tertullian and Jerome on the reproach of novelty cast upon the truth, as she again emerged out of the midst of error? As Chrysostom and Augustine said afterwards, that "the Church, in a period of calamity, did not appear at all, and that she was then known only through the medium of the Holy Scriptures; that she was sometimes eclipsed, as are the sun, the moon, and the stars; and that it happened also that her members were dispersed;[3] so Tertullian says, that then the Church is found in one or two members,—"For," says Jerome, "it is not within the walls of a temple, but in the truth of the doctrines, that the Church is continued."[4]

Yes, reader! this is the true antiquity of the Church. "Antiquity without truth," says a judicious theologian, "is only an old age of error."[5] Let me be told, then, Christ is there by his word, and by his Spirit, and I answer with Ignatius, the

[1] Hic est mos diabolicus ut per antiquitatis traducem commendetur fallacia. Augustin. Vet. Nov. Testam. quæst. 114.

[2] Cont. gent. lib. ii.

[3] Chrys. in Matth. xxiv. August. Ep. 28, ad Vinc. Ep. 80. ad Hesych.

[4] Hieron. in Ps. cxxxiii.

[5] B. Pictet. Theol. Chr. liv. xiv. chap. 15.

disciple of St. John, "I prefer him to the most ancient monuments."[1] But if Christ be wanting, but if his word be misunderstood, crushed, twisted, or scattered by traditions, errors, or continual variations, I am afflicted by an antiquity so unfortunate, and I wish it what the Lord gave in the sixteenth century, to several of his afflicted Churches; I mean, the renewal and purgation of it, which should be called REFORMATION.[2] But, finally, (as I have said something on the subject elsewhere),[3] if we must speak of antiquity, to whom would this character more properly belong than to the Churches of the East, which have never had any connection with the Papal Church of Rome, which came after them? And who could more justly assert it than those Bible Churches, which trace back their origin to the very days of the apostles, and which never knew what it was to obey a Pope or a Romish Council?

What a childish question it is, which we sometimes hear from minds above mediocrity—"Where was the Protestant religion before the Reformers?" "It was with us," reply whole nations and innumerable Churches; "because with us was the Bible,

[1] Epistle to the Philadelphians.

[2] See the beautiful preface of "Histoire de la Reformation du Seizième Siècle."

[3] Les droits divins du Protestantisme, maintenus sur le fondement de l'eternelle Vèrité de Dieu. Genève, 1838. Regarding this work, see Christian Herald, July 1839.

and we were in possession of it from the earliest Gospel times." Reader, is not this more than a sufficient answer? And with respect to those who were then brought out of the bosom of the Romish Church to the pure Gospel, may they not, as an answer to this question, ask, in their turn, Where was the mineral gold before the fire of the crucible separated it from the dross?

But farther to extend this research, already too much prolonged, is, I imagine, superfluous. For my satisfaction, the argument is complete; and I recapitulate it in these words:—The Romish Church told me that she, and she alone, was the Church of Christ; and to prove it, she propped herself upon the "unity of her creed, and of her rule of faith, and of the perpetuity of both the one and the other." Now, I have put to the test these two assertions, and I have seen, with the most satisfactory evidence to my own mind, that neither unity of belief, nor unity in the rule of faith, nor unity and infallibility, in the application of this rule by the power of the Church, nor even antiquity, present themselves in that Church, such, at least, as she now is, and even for twelve or fourteen centuries back.

For myself, then, I cannot, (for I am occupied with an investigation, in which I am deeply concerned), no, I cannot come to the conclusion, that the eternal divinity of the Lord Jesus, to which I wish and ought to render homage, is reflected in the

Romish Church, either in regard of his quality of Teacher, or of Lawgiver, or Chief Shepherd, nor, above all, in regard of that holiness, which is inseparable from the work of his Spirit.

Once more, then, I reply to the summons to enter the Romish Church—Bear with me if I cannot do it: Does not the Bible hinder me from doing it?

THE POPE.

"You might perhaps think so," replies the Church of Rome, "if you were a competent judge in this matter. But Jesus, in his love to his flock, has not left it without a leader who feeds it, and who, in the name of the Son of God, gives a decision above your ignorance." "The Pope is appointed by God. St. Peter, having received from the Lord Jesus sovereign authority over the Church, exercised it first at Rome, as Bishop; he then transmitted it, with the right of succession, to every Bishop of Rome, who, under the name of Pope, is the Vicar of the Lord Jesus, and the Head of the whole Church."[1]

Stop! I exclaim. You forget with what crimes several of the Popes have been stained. "No matter," the Church of Rome tells me, "their charge is supernatural, and independent of their persons. If by

[1] Bellarm. De Pontifice Romano. Totus liber.

sin, they become dead members of the Church, their vocation preserves them alive in virtue of their office, through the power of the Holy Ghost, of whom they continue the instruments, and who speaks in them." [1]

I understand: something in the same way that the Spirit of God spoke by the ungodly Saul, by the false prophet Balaam, and even by his ass.[2] But this does not convince me; for both Saul, and Balaam, and the ass, all spoke good things, and did not contradict one another in their testimonies; while the Popes, I understand, have done quite the reverse. Thus, not only has the Church of Rome often carried decisions of a Pope by appeal to that of a Council; and which would not have been the case, if the Holy Spirit had spoken by the Pope; but, moreover, the Councils have formally condemned what several Popes had decided, by their certain knowledge, and by the authority of St. Peter.[3] Other Popes have been excommunicated.[4] At other times the Church has rejected Councils approved by Popes. Besides all this, several Popes have maintained heresies. For example, Honorius was a monothelite, and for this very thing was anathematized by three Councils; and Gregory VII., Benedict IX., Sylvester II., Boniface

[1] Bellarm. De Eccles. Mil. lib. iii. c. 9. Pighius, Hier. Eccl. lib. iv. c. 8. Conc. Const. sess. 15.

[2] Num. xxii. 23., &c.

[3] La Placette, Obs. sur l'Hist. Eccles. part i. obs. 7, 8, 9, 10, &c.

[4] Pictet. Theol. Chr. tome ii. p. 435.

VIII., and Alexander VI. gave multiplied proofs of it. The contradictions of Popes among themselves are innumerable, and their avowals of error and ignorance are not matters of doubtful disputation.[1]

Then, reader, how can I infer, from these facts, that the Holy Spirit speaks by the mouth of the Popes? "He does it," replies the Church of Rome; "for you cannot but admit, that being the successor of St. Peter, the Pope has received his prerogatives, and that thus he is, as that apostle was, the Vicar of Jesus Christ." What difficulty I have in believing it! I reply. But still let us see; and let us compare this assertion, so positive, with the facts of the case.

1. *The Primacy of St. Peter.* I do not here enter on the question of the constitution of the Church, as democratical or monarchical, as Presbyterian or Episcopalian; but contenting myself, in passing, with remarking, on the one hand, that Bishop Cyprian declared, that "he could decide nothing by himself in the Church;" and on the other hand, that Ambrose and Jerome say, that "before the devil had introduced ambition into the Church, every thing was conducted by the college of elders or presbyters."[2] I enter on the subject with this question: "Did

[1] Dupin, Doct. Chret. lib. i. c. 14, &c.

[2] Cypr. lib. iii. epist. 19. ad Cletum. Ambr. in 1 Tim. i. 5. Hieron. epist. 1. ad Tur. (Scharp. p. 1564.)

Jesus Christ establish, in the person of the apostle St. Peter, a spiritual monarch to represent him in the Church of Rome, and to whom the bishops of that city should be successors?" I cannot believe it, and here are my reasons.

First Fact. This decisive word (as the Church of Rome says), by which the Lord established St. Peter chief of the Church, when he said to him, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my Church,"[1] was spoken in the presence of twelve who heard it, and who assuredly also understood the meaning of it. Now, I see, a year after (and not before) this circumstance, that the apostles contended among themselves about the superiority, or primacy; for which the Lord censures them, declaring at the same time, that his Church should not be like a kingdom of this world, where there is a prince, a person possessed of dominion.[2] As for myself, this fact appears to me to be decisive, since it shows me two things; the one, that the apostles did not think that St. Peter had received the pre-eminence from the Saviour, since they were seeking it for themselves; the other is, that the Lord had not given it, since in his

[1] Επι ταυτη τη Πετρα. It is to be observed, that in French there is a kind of play of words on the resemblance of the name of *Pierre* (Peter) with the word *pierre* (a stone.) In the text this does not take place. The apostle's name is *Petros*, and that o the rock *petra*.

[2] Matt. xx. 20. Mark x. 35. Luke xxii. 25.

reprehension, he does not say to them, "Do you not know that Peter is above you?" which he would have said, if the thing had been so.

Reader, what do you think of this fact? But it is answered, that "it was not till after the Saviour's resurrection, that St. Peter was solemnly appointed over the Church, when the Lord said to him, Feed my sheep, and feed my lambs."[1] Well, then, here are facts, which took place after the Lord's resurrection.

Second Fact. I receive it from a deputy, to whom a commission is given, and that deputy is St. Peter himself. The city of Samaria had heard the gospel from the mouth of Philip the deacon. The apostles came to the knowledge of this fact, and they deputed Peter and John to preach there. Now, it was five years since Christ was risen, and since, it is said, St. Peter presided over the apostolical college. What, therefore, at that time, became of his presidency, and of his authority, since not only was it not he who did depute, but it was he himself who was deputed? Reader, do you know what became of the presidency and the authority?

Third Fact. It is, however, an accused who furnishes me with it, and that accused is still St. Peter. The Lord Jesus had, through him, sent the Gospel to Cornelius, the Roman centurion, and Peter, the

[1] Bellarm. De Pont. Rom. lib. i. c. 13, 14, 15.

Jew, had to go into the house of this Gentile, and eat there. The apostles and brethren, scandalised by this conduct of Peter, called him to account for it, and Peter had to submit as a scholar. Now, says the Church of Rome, Peter had, by this time, been eleven years invested with his authority. But neither the apostles, nor the Church, nor St. Peter himself, ever thought that such an authority existed, since the Church controuled the very person, the whole of whose proceedings she ought to have approved and adored; and since the apostle himself submits to be schooled, which he would not have done, if he had considered himself as the chief, and particularly as infallible. Reader, does not all this appear to you at least probable?

Fourth and fifth Fact. These last go on to an epoch, in which the supremacy of St. Peter, according to the Romish Church, had already acquired much power.—Here they are: The apostle St. Paul had not, as the twelve had done, lived with Jesus, and he had persecuted the Church, which made him say, that "he was not worthy to be called an apostle."[1] He had, therefore, at that time, quite a suitable occasion, when enemies reproached him with these things,[2] to recognize the supremacy of Cephas, and submit to it. But how far is he from doing it! Not only does he declare to the Church,

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 9. [2] Gal. v. 12. 1 Cor. ix. 1—3.

that Cephas had taught him nothing, and committed nothing to his charge; but he announces, on the contrary, that he, Paul, "withstood him to the face," because he showed himself to be fallible, by Judaising at Antioch before the pagans.[1] And seven years after (that is, about thirty years after the Saviour's resurrection) he distinctly declares that "in nothing is he behind the chiefest apostles."[2]

Reader, do you think that St. Paul believed in the primacy of Cephas?

"Meanwhile," it is replied, "Jesus Christ has committed to St. Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and has told him, that whatever he binds or unbinds on earth, shall be so also in heaven.[3] I know it, and I know farther, that, in the ninth century, the people paid adoration to two large silver keys which, they were assured, were the very keys which Jesus had committed to St. Peter.[4] But notwithstanding this proof, I must remember that among the Jews, the keys were the symbols of teaching, which the Lord declared, when he reproached the teachers of the law with having taken away the key of knowledge.[5] For as to the key of heavenly power, it is in the hands of "him who hath the key of David," and who "gives not his glory to another."[6]

[1] Gal. ii. 11.
[2] 2 Cor. xii. 11 Gal. ii. 6.
[3] Matt. xvi. 19.
[4] Pietet. Theol. Chret. tome ii. p. 425.
[5] Luke xi. 52.
[6] Rev. iii 17. Is. xlii. 8.

Besides, it was not to St. Peter alone, but to the twelve, that the Lord gave the power of absolving or condemning; and this also he did by his word, and not otherwise; for he, and he alone, is the lawgiver who can destroy, and who can save.[1]

So far also was St. Peter himself from claiming pre-eminence over his companions in labour, or even over the ordinary pastors of the Church, that he said to them, I also am an elder, or presbyter, as well as you, and far from commanding you regarding your duty, I pray you to perform it;[2] and that, toward the close of his life, on the point of being dislodged from the body, as he says, he recommends to the Church to nourish itself by the writings of St. Paul.[3] Surely, then, he did not think his own superior to them, either in certainty, or authority.

VARIATIONS.

Neither did the apostolical Fathers think it. "All the apostles were such as Peter, clothed with the same honour, and the same power."[4] "If it is said," remarks Jerome, "that the Church is founded on Peter, the same thing is quite as much said of the other apostles."[5] "If St. Paul said that he is the least of the apostles," observes Ambrose, "he says it only in

[1] John xx. 23. James iv. 12.
[2] 1 Pet. v. 1.
[3] 2 Pet. iii. 15, 16.
[4] Cypr. De Unitate Eccles. (Scharp. p. 1581.)
[5] Idem. Hieron. in Matt. xvi.

reference to the time of his being called, and not in regard of the glory of miracles, nor of dignity."[1] "Cephas is called Peter," say Gregory Nazianzen, and Theophylact, "because the Church is founded on the verity of the faith, which he confessed, and that it was he who first made the confession." "Every disciple," says Origen, "is also that rock;"[2] and Cyprian affirms, that "this declaration of the Saviour is equally applicable to all the bishops."[3] This is confirmed by the bishop of Avila, who, in speaking of the power of the keys, teaches, that "it is to the ministers of the Church, and still more to the Church herself, that they have been given;"[4] "meanwhile," they persist in telling me, "St. Peter was, for about five-and-twenty years, bishop of Rome, where he himself appointed his successors."[5]

2. *Episcopate of St. Peter at Rome.* He must have done it then after his death, I must reply, for observe, reader, whether it was possible before. It is evident that this apostle did not die before the year 66. If he was bishop of Rome for five-and-twenty years, he began to be so in the year forty-one. But the history of the Acts of the Apostles shows us without interruption, St. Peter, whether at Jerusalem, or Cesarea, or Antioch, only up to the year 52. Here,

[1] Ambr. in 2 Cor. xi. [2] Tract. I. in Matt.
[3] Cypr. Epist. 27. (Vid. Scharp. p. 1582.)
[4] Pictet. Theol. Chret. tome. ii. p. 428.
[5] Bellarm. [6] Pont. Rom. lib ii. c. 6, &c.

then, you have the twenty-five years of his Episcopate reduced to fourteen. But, moreover, St. Paul writes his epistle to the Church of Rome in 58, and though he there gives his salutations in singular detail to the brethren of this flock, he makes no mention of their bishop, still less of Cephas, who was one of the three pillars!

The twenty-five years are already reduced to less than eight; for who would suppose that St. Peter had been the Bishop of Rome, when St. Paul wrote to his diocese, and that that apostle had sent him no salutation? But there is something more. St. Paul, himself, arrived at Rome, in Italy, and though he was eager to see the brethren, and to receive at his own house, the Jews who were at Rome, Peter is still omitted. No mention is then made of his episcopacy, or even of his person. How is this to be imagined, if the apostle Cephas had been the Bishop of Rome, and that for a long time? Finally, it is from Rome that St. Paul writes in 62, or 63, his epistles to Philemon, to the Philippians, to the Ephesians, and to the Colossians; nor yet, in these, does he make any mention of Peter; nor any more does he it even in 66, in his second Epistle to Timothy, which also he wrote from Rome, a little time before his martyrdom. Now, who will believe that an apostle, living in the same city as another apostle, and he the bishop of that city, and circumstanced as Paul was, should neither be visited, nor

assisted by his brother, and companion in labour; that he should even be abandoned by him,[1] and that, in four letters which he addresses to the Churches, and particularly in a fifth, where he speaks to Timothy of his ties and his trials, he speaks not a word of the bishop of the place—of the apostle of the Lord, who, like Paul himself, was soon to die for the faith.[2] Reader, if you had been in Paul's place, would you have been so forgetful?

3. *Succession of St. Peter.* "In the meantime," exclaims the whole Church of Rome, "St. Peter left successors at Rome."[3] But when? I pray you. It was not during his life; and how shall we admit that he may have done at the epoch of his death, in the year 66, when more than one apostle, and particularly St. John, was still alive? What pious and uninspired man could ever have put himself on a level with one of the apostles? How much less could he have taken the authority upon himself? Besides, what says the Scripture in regard of this matter? "The Lord Jesus," Paul declares, and that more than once, "has himself given some to be apostles, others to be prophets, others to be evangelists, others to be pastors and teachers."[4] Here you see, reader,

[1] 2 Tim. iv. 16.

[2] See the complete proof of this in Bost. "Du Pouvoir de St. Pierre dans l' Eglise," &c. Geneve, 1833.

[3] Bellarm, De Pont. Rom. lib. ii. c. 12.

[4] 1 Cor. xii. 28. Eph. iv. 11.

that he has done it himself, and not, either by one of his apostles, his vicar, or still less by the successive vicars of that first substitute, of whom Jesus never spoke so much as one word.

ANTICHRIST.

"This being so," perhaps you will say to me, reader, "what are we to think of the papal power, which claims to be what God has not made it? Must it not be that man of sin, that son of perdition, of whom St. Paul speaks in so much detail?"[1] For in fact, is not this he "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped?" Was it not a Pope that put his foot on the neck of the emperor Frederic, while he pronounced these words, which the Scripture applies to the Messiah: "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and the adder; the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet."[2] Was it not the Pope that exalted himself, "even to be seated as God in the temple of God, acting as if he were God?"

Does not the Pope ascribe to himself this power and this great name? Does not he allow himself to be called God? Has he not said of himself, that he is a God upon earth? Is it not to him that a triumphal arch is raised, of which the inscription

[1] 2 Thes. ii. [2] Alexander III. Ps. xci. 13.

says, that he was justly called God? Was it not to him that it was said in the Councils of Lateran, that he had all power in heaven and on earth? Finally, is he not adored on the altar on the day of his accession to the pontifical throne?[1] Does he not also act as God, when he calls himself infallible, and exalts his decisions above the Holy Scriptures, certain words of which he changes or retrenches? Is it not, then, the papal power that fills up "the mystery of iniquity, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders; and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish?"

Has he not had, in his origin, in his growth, and in his progress, multiplied works of darkness, false revelations, false miracles, false legends, superstitions, and idolatries of every kind, and subtile seductions of souls, from whom he takes away, or withholds, even the book of God? I repeat the question; is not

[1] Greg. II. Epist. ad Leon. Sixtus IV. "Et merito in terris diceris esse Deus." Zoder. Zamor. ii. 1. Albam. De pot. Pap. part i. 22. Anthon, part iii. 22.

"A man fearing God, and worthy of all credit, told me, that, being at Rome, it was necessary for him to have a conversation with the Pope, who, while speaking to him, placed his hand on his arm.

"After the Pope had retired, one of the Cardinals came up to my friend, and asked him, with a kind of adoration, if he was not truly blessed in having spoken with God upon earth, and in having been touched by him? My friend's reply to him was: Pray don't blaspheme!"

fore, reader, in this investigation, which, although it may be truly said to be superabundant, is yet necessary.

THE WORSHIP OF THE ROMISH CHURCH.

It is with an effort that I approach this portion of my investigation. I must encounter in it the application of principles which I have just examined, and I cannot but have a melancholy presentiment of its nature. In fact, what is to be expected that can give life to my soul, and consolation to my heart, from doctrines, of which the Word of God is not the substance, and to the pretended origin and object of which the Spirit gives the lie? What heavenly result can I expect from a religion, which neither possesses divine unity in its creed, nor divine certainty in its instructions, nor divine stability in its institutions, and which, based on a vain pretension to the primacy, strengthens itself in its fatal haughtiness, from which it wishes to crush the humble, but invincible faith of the disciples of the Bible? I shall, nevertheless, prosecute this examination, praying the Lord Jesus to keep my Spirit in his peace, and not to allow my convictions to make me forget, that if my neighbour is led astray, or goes astray, I ought to guard against adding to his misery, either by contemptuous fault-finding, or harsh reproaches.

I am going, then, to approach this worship, to which it is wished that I should unite myself. I am

going to visit, on different days, one of the Churches, in which it is celebrated, and I shall judge of it only by facts, and not by hearsay.

FIRST VISIT.

PRAYERS AND CHANTING IN LATIN.

I enter one of those Churches, in which the Romish worship is observed, and, I own it, I am immediately arrested, and, as it were, overpowered. A solemn and mysterious impression gets possession of my mind, and something like devotion comes over my senses, and rouses them.

The temple is magnificently adorned; there are canopies, banners, and sumptuous tapestry hangings; there are statues of exquisite workmanship, paintings, touching or terrible, and admirable in art; there are numerous priests covered with splendid vestments, and who officiate with pomp; there are altars, richly adorned, and encircled with wax candles and lamps, which continually burn amid waves of the sweetest perfume; there are organs, which bellow, which make the arches re-echo, or which seem to moan and to mourn along the aisles of the edifice; there are bells, whose sounds, grave and slowly repeated, call and collect together a people, and then

give them the signal for adoration, in which the crowd prostrate themselves, and so continue; the silence is profound, and the worship begins. But what! has this whole multitude lost their senses and become mad, as an apostle says?[1]

These men, these women, and even these children, all speak at the same time, answer to one another, or follow the officiating priest: they pray, they sing, and they raise their voices;—and yet all the while they have said nothing at all!—"It is into the air that they speak," and the whole of their discourse is merely the confused sound of instruments that make a noise;[2] for it is a foreign language, it is Latin that they are mouthing.

Quite close to me, some old men and some young women are pronouncing, with fervour, these unknown words. I bend toward these devout worshippers, and ask them the meaning of the words they are repeating. It is a prayer, they tell me. But what is the meaning of it? We do not know, they add. And my heart is in anguish, and its pain increases still more when I find the preacher, who teaches the people from the pulpit, scarcely ever quote the Word of God, and when he does it, it is in the same language, which the people do not understand.

Quite overcome with sadness, I quit this temple; and on my way, I fall in with a man of my own age,

[1] 1 Cor. xiv. 23. [2] Ibid. verse 7, 9, &c.

and of cultivated exterior, to whom I unfold the grief that oppresses me. "Ah!" replies he, "it is one of the commands of the Church. The Latin is our sacred tongue."[1] "But the Scripture is still more sacred, and it expressly forbids this usage." "I agree, but the Church, which cannot err, for she is infallible, has good reasons for acting otherwise."— "Otherwise than God pleases!" "Ah! God pleases also, since he is with the Church." "But it is by his word only that he is ever there, and no other way." "It may be so, but the Church finds that devotion is more hindered than promoted by the use of a known tongue."[2] "But the Scripture says precisely the opposite, since the use of a foreign tongue, in teaching the word of God, is there pointed to as a mark of the wrath of God."[3] "No matter. The Church is infallible; and as in ancient times, her service was performed in Latin, it is proper, in order to maintain everywhere the unity of the Church, that the apostolical usage continue." "But you forget that the Latin language was anciently the language of the people. God then wished, as he still wishes, the people to understand the worship of the Church." "It may be so, but the Church thinks it enough for the people to pray, to

[1] Conc. Trid. sess. xxii. c. 8, Bellarm. De Verbo Dei, ii. 15.
[2] Staplet, Jesuita. Contra Guel, a. 3, p. 75.
[3] 1 Cor. xiv. 17—22. Isa. xxviii. 11.

give thanks, or chant, by intention, without understanding the words joined to the act." "But the Scripture says, that he who does such a thing, is 'like an instrument which gives an uncertain sound;'[1] and that 'he acts as a madman.'" "It may be so; but the Church cannot err, and she wishes the people to trust to what the priests say, who know the meaning of the prayers, and of the chantings. Our business is absolutely to believe the Church, and not to understand her."[2] "But the Scripture makes itself be understood; and moreover, it forbids, condemns, rejects what the Church of Rome does in this matter." "The Scripture!" say you. "Pray, what would become of the people, if it were given to them? Do not our most learned Doctors say, that 'to give it to shoemakers, to bakers, and to carriers, would be to cast holy things to dogs.'[3] The consequence would then be, as the Jesuit Salmeron remarks, 'that all these artizans would become prophets, and their wives prophetesses.'[4] What an abuse!" "An abuse! that the people should themselves hear the voice of God, and could pray to him also in their own language!" "I have already said with the

[1] 1 Cor. xiv. 6—9, 23.

[2] Catech. Conc. Trid. part. i. a. 21.

[3] Sixtus Sen. Bibl. Ann. lib. vii. an. 152. Alb. Pighius, Epist. ad. Erasm. f. 16.

[4] Salm. in 1 Cor. xiv. Le Prosél. Evan. De la Lect. de l'Ecriture Sainte, p. 55.

Church, 'let them repeat the words of the priests, and that is enough.'" "But the Apostle St. Paul has said, 'that he would rather speak five words in the Church, that were understood and which edified others, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.'"[1] "St. Paul thought so, but the Church has always judged otherwise."

VARIATIONS.

"Always!—Not quite so fast, I pray you; for, among other apostolical Fathers, the great Basil tells us the very opposite, that the uniform custom of all the Churches is for every one to offer up prayers to God in his own tongue."[2] To the same purpose Augustine declares, that 'nobody is edified by words which he does not understand.' 'Let our song,' says he, 'ascend to God in accents which we comprehend.'[3] 'He who speaks in an unknown tongue,' says Chrysostom, 'is useless to others, as well as to himself.'[4] 'Do you bring the Church together to edify it?' says Ambrose, 'then utter words which your audience understands.'[5] 'If we do not understand the Psalms which we sing,' says Cassiodore, 'we act as madmen.'"[6]

[1] 1 Cor. xiv. 19.
[2] Bas. Epis. 63. [3] August in Gen. xii. 8. ap. Scharp. p. 50.
[4] Hom. 35, on 1 Cor. [5] Ambr. in 1 Cor. xiv.
[6] Cass. in Psalm xlvi.

this power that of antichrist? At least, is not this the opinion of several Romish bishops and Doctors, whose testimonies must be admitted as complete evidence? Is it not, in particular, the eloquent Bishop of Clairvaux, who laments that the venom of hypocrisy has infected the whole body of the Church, in which the ministers of Christ are subjected to Antichrist.[1]

Is it not Pope Gregory I. himself, who says, "assuredly whoever claims to himself the universal priesthood, is the forerunner of antichrist."[2] Is it not the Bishops of Cologne and of Treves, who wrote to Pope Nicholas I., that he who, while calling himself the servant of servants, makes himself the lord of lords, as if he were God, and says, "I cannot err," is that man of sin, who is called antichrist?[3] Again, is it not Bishop Arnulph, who, in one of the Councils of Rheims, after having deplored the corruption of the Church, delares that a Pope without charity, and puffed up with knowledge, is nothing else than antichrist.[4] Is it not Aventinus, who, in his Annals, gives an account of the writings of several Doctors,

[1] Bernard. Serm. 33, in Cant. Cant.

[2] Greg. lib. iv. epist. 34. [3] Avent. Ann. lib. iv.

[4] Fourth Council of Rheims, in the tenth century; the eleventh held in that city. (In the Reclamations Necessaires, &c., p. 44, I omitted saying that it was the sixth of the tenth century.) Fr. Turrettini de Necess. Secess. Disp. 7. Scharp. de Antichristo, p. 1656.

and of the edict of the Emperor Lewis IV., or rather V., which contain the same sentiments?

What, then, am I to think on this matter? Reader, it is for you to decide. As for me, I limit myself, in my researches, to the examination of what the Church of Rome presents to me, with a view to draw me into her bosom; and that topic not being among the motives she suggests, I leave it entirely to your own individual judgment. As to my own, it seems always to become distinct, and to lead me to conclude, that "the word of God does not permit me to listen to the propositions, which the Church of Rome makes to me, among which, the unity, the infallibility, and the apostolical succession are absolutely overturned by the Holy Scripture.

This being the case, I might here terminate my examination, and rest satisfied with this conviction, that "the Church of Rome, such as she is at present, is not that to which God hath entrusted on earth the administration of salvation;" a conviction which comes to be added to the first, which I have already received respecting that Church, regarding the revelation of salvation. But there are still several points, which, although they lose all force, whenever it is found that they have not the basis of a divine and infallible Church, yet they are of such a nature as to render it necessary to confront them also with the testimony of God Follow me, there-

fore, reader, in this investigation, which, although it may be truly said to be superabundant, is yet necessary.

THE WORSHIP OF THE ROMISH CHURCH.

It is with an effort that I approach this portion of my investigation. I must encounter in it the application of principles which I have just examined, and I cannot but have a melancholy presentiment of its nature. In fact, what is to be expected that can give life to my soul, and consolation to my heart, from doctrines, of which the Word of God is not the substance, and to the pretended origin and object of which the Spirit gives the lie? What heavenly result can I expect from a religion, which neither possesses divine unity in its creed, nor divine certainty in its instructions, nor divine stability in its institutions, and which, based on a vain pretension to the primacy, strengthens itself in its fatal haughtiness, from which it wishes to crush the humble, but invincible faith of the disciples of the Bible? I shall, nevertheless, prosecute this examination, praying the Lord Jesus to keep my Spirit in his peace, and not to allow my convictions to make me forget, that if my neighbour is led astray, or goes astray, I ought to guard against adding to his misery, either by contemptuous fault-finding, or harsh reproaches.

I am going, then, to approach this worship, to which it is wished that I should unite myself. I am

going to visit, on different days, one of the Churches, in which it is celebrated, and I shall judge of it only by facts, and not by hearsay.

FIRST VISIT.

PRAYERS AND CHANTING IN LATIN.

I enter one of those Churches, in which the Romish worship is observed, and, I own it, I am immediately arrested, and, as it were, overpowered. A solemn and mysterious impression gets possession of my mind, and something like devotion comes over my senses, and rouses them.

The temple is magnificently adorned; there are canopies, banners, and sumptuous tapestry hangings; there are statues of exquisite workmanship, paintings, touching or terrible, and admirable in art; there are numerous priests covered with splendid vestments, and who officiate with pomp; there are altars, richly adorned, and encircled with wax candles and lamps, which continually burn amid waves of the sweetest perfume; there are organs, which bellow, which make the arches re-echo, or which seem to moan and to mourn along the aisles of the edifice; there are bells, whose sounds, grave and slowly repeated, call and collect together a people, and then

tending the Eucharist, and I confess that what I have just seen has quite surprised me. Hist! hist! said the priest to me, as he drew me alone, but politely, into the sacristy. Let us not disturb the faithful. Come with me; I can edify you on all these matters.

The case is this, I tell him, when we are alone. I am dissatisfied. The Bible is known to me. I know how the Lord Jesus instituted the holy Supper, and I see that you disobey him; as, according to his order, the believer ought to take and eat the bread broken, and that he ought also to take and drink the cup; and this is not done here.

Priest. Have you not seen the bread given to the communicants?

Candidate. The Lord has said, "take and eat," speaking of the bread; but here you say, "receive and swallow," which is not quite the same thing. Moreover, it is written, that the Lord broke the bread; that believers break the bread; and, in the consecration of the supper, St. Paul says, "The bread which we break;"[1] but you, on the contrary, give a whole host, which must not be broken. You therefore do not obey the Holy Scriptures.

Priest. The Church, which is infallible, has determined that it should be so.

Candidate. But is not the Scripture, at all events, infallible, and does it not, among other things, com-

[1] Matt. xxvi. 26. Acts ii. 42, 46. 1 Cor. x. 16.

mand the people to take the cup and drink it? Why, then, does the Church of Rome take it away from them?

Priest. For six reasons.[1] Listen. 1. Because it is necessary to take care, above all things, that the blood of the Lord do not fall on the ground.

Candidate. The blood of the Lord! say you! But it is wine that the cup contains.

Priest. Have patience. We shall see presently as to that. I say then,

2. Because, as the Eucharist is carried to the sick, the wine, if too long kept, might become acid.[2]

3. Some communicants could not bear either the taste or smell of the wine.

4. Thus the Church has wisely decreed to keep away from the faithful every thing in their spiritual food that might injure their bodily health.

5. Besides, what expense would the use of wine occasion in countries, in which it is not produced?

6. But, above all, was it not necessary to tear to pieces that detestable heresy, which dares tos ay that the Lord Jesus, whole and entire, is not in one of the kinds alone?

Reader! I was quite confounded. I did not know what I was hearing, and whether it might not

[1] Catech. Trid. pars. ii. art. 71.

[2] Si diutius vini species asservaretur, coascesceret. (Ubi supra.)

be the voice of one of those whom the Holy Spirit has expressly foretold, and who, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils, teach lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron.[1] But I drove away that thought; and persuaded that it was only in ignorance, yet in perfect sincerity, that this priest spoke to me as he did, I said to him, But, Sir, does not the church, prostrate herself before her Lord?[2] How, then, should she do any thing, other than he commands her?

II. Transubstantiation.

Priest. Also her Lord hath said to her, "This is my body," when giving her the bread; "This is my blood," when giving her the cup; and the Church believes it. She believes, then, this most wonderful thing,[3] that as Jesus Christ, when he pronounced these words, changed the bread and the wine into his own body and his own blood, every priest also has the power to produce the same change, and . . .

Candidate. I pray you, Sir, be silent. To me it seems that you are guilty of blasphemy against my Lord and my King, in thus putting his holy and glorious majesty at the disposal of a miserable sinner. No, no; you did not mean to say this. It would be an impiety.

[1] 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2.
[2] Psalm xlv. 11.
[3] Abrégé du Catéchisme, &c. p. 51.

Priest. Be calm, if you please. This is a profound mystery. Adore it with docility. It is the Church that commands you to do so. I say, then, that while at the holy mass, the priest pronounces the words of consecration, the bread and the wine are changed into the body and blood of Jesus Christ; and that, moreover, as every thing in Christ is inseparable, his soul and his divinity are there: not doubtless, that for all this, Jesus Christ leaves heaven, but that he is present at the same time both in Heaven and in the Eucharist. This is what the Church teaches; this therefore is the truth. [1]

Candidate. The truth! What shall I say to you, Sir! From my infancy I have believed that nothing but the word of God is the truth,[2] and I cannot change my persuasion. Now nothing can be farther than what you have just said, from the word, which means that the communicant shall take and eat the bread broken, and take and drink the cup, and that also—will you listen to it?—in commemoration of the Saviour.

Priest. But why do what is useless,[3] since Jesus Christ is whole and entire under each of the two

[1] Conc. Trid. sess. xiii. c. 2. Leo, De Pass. serm. 7. Bellarm. de Euchar. et de Missa, libri. Catech. Trid. pars ii. tota. Abrégé du Catech. &c., leçon. 33.

[2] John xvii. 17.

[3] Conc. Trid. sess. xxi. De com. sub. utraque spec. c. 1, 2, 3, &c.

kinds, since he is living and animated in the Eucharist?

Candidate. Jesus, say you, is living and animated in the Eucharist, in this host which you give to the communicant! Do you teach that Jesus is living and animated in that bit of paste?

Priest. This is my belief; for it is what the Church teaches.

Candidate. So then you believe without hesitation, and before God, that the apostles, when they received the bread, which the Lord broke to them, and the cup, of which they all drank, thought that they were receiving into themselves the body, the blood, the soul, and the divinity of the Saviour, and that they thought also that this bread which they ate, and this wine which they drank, were living and animated! Do you believe, Sir, that the Apostles had any such thought?

Priest. Ho! not so fast, I pray you! If they had no such thought, would they not have made their Master a liar? Had not Jesus Christ declared to them that "his flesh is the living bread," "that it is meat indeed," and that, in order to have life, it is necessary to eat it?[2] Has he not said this?

Candidate. Why do you quote only the half of what he said? He said, if we do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and if we do not drink his blood,

[1] Abrégé du Catech. &c. p. 53. [2] John vi. 48—59.

we shall not have life in us. Taking your own words, then, I ask myself again, why you take away from the people the cup, which the Lord hath given them ?

Priest. You at least acknowledge that, in these words Jesus Christ positively says that the bread is his flesh. oes he not say so ?

Candidate. Not quite, if you please. The Lord says, it is true, that his flesh is the life-giving bread ; but he does not say that his flesh consists of wheaten bread. That is quite another thing. And allow me to remark with all possible respect, that the Romish Church seems to me to make frequent use of sophisms of that kind, by which, by the help of an equivocal expression, they employ words in a sense, the very opposite of their natural meaning. This appears to me very evident in the present case ; for, because the Lord calls his flesh, (that is, his humanity) a heavenly nourishment, a bread which gives life ; you make him say, not my flesh is a bread, but the bread is my flesh, which is quite another idea. If the Saviour had said, I will give my flesh to the world under the form of bread, you might perhaps thence infer, that he meant at that time, to speak of the bread of the Supper. But he, on the contrary, says, that the bread which he will give shall be his flesh ; thereby teaching that his human nature offered in sacrifice, shall become, through the Holy Spirit, the food of souls. He has said, accordingly,

my flesh is truly a heavenly bread; but he never said, an earthly bread shall become my flesh.

Priest. Indeed, Sir, it seems to me that all this is a mere play upon words.

Candidate. Well; let us see. In pointing to a piece of meat on my table, I say to my family, this flesh is a nourishing bread, (an aliment.) And on this my children pretend, that I said that the bread (which is also before them) is flesh. Would you think their mistake was a mere play upon words?

Priest. Has not Jesus Christ, however, said, my flesh is a nourishment, and my blood is a beverage?

Candidate. Doubtless; but he has not said, the bread and the wine of the Supper shall be that flesh and that blood. Besides, what does he say immediately after, to those carnal Jews who imagined, (as indeed the Romish Church does) that the Lord Jesus would in fact give them his own flesh to eat, and his own blood to drink? Does he approve, or rather, does he not reprehend, their gross misapprehension, saying to them, "The flesh profiteth nothing. The words which I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."[1]

Priest. I am far, very far from granting it; for (I will repeat it) he has said "This is my body," when speaking of bread. The bread, therefore, is his

[1] Ἡ σὰρξ οὐκ ὠφελεῖ οὐδέν. Τὰ ῥήματα ἃ ἐγὼ λαλῶ ὑμῖν, πνεῦμά ἐστι καὶ ζωή ἐστιν. John vi. 63.

body. That is positive; for his words are sacramental.[1]

Candidate. But, Sir, those also were sacramental words, which Jehovah uttered when he said to Abraham, "This is my covenant,"[2] when speaking of circumcision, which certainly was no more than a figure or seal of it. Those words also were sacramental, and above all others, which God spake, when he instituted among his people, the sacrifice of the lamb, saying, this is "the very passing," (the passover) "of the Lord."[3] Was the slain and roasted lamb, then, the passing of the destroying angel? or rather, was it not merely the sign, and memorial of it?[4] Farther, when St. Paul speaks of the rock of Horeb, whence the waters gushed forth to quench the thirst of the Israelites in their journeyings, and says that "this rock was Christ," does he not say it positively, and sacramentally? What more mysterious, more miraculous, more sacramental, than this rock, this mere flinty stone, as it is called in one of the Psalms, where God created uninterruptedly the river that slaked the thirst of the people? Now, "This rock was Christ," says the Holy Spirit.[5] Did he

[1] Conc. Trid. sess. xiii. c. 5. Catech. Trid. pars ii. c. 20, 21, 22, 23, &c.

[2] זאת בריתי. Gen. xvii. 10.

[3] פסח הוא ליהוה. Exod. xx. 11.

[4] Ex. xvii. 6. Numb. xx. 9.

[5] Ἡ δὲ πετρα ἦν ὁ Χριστος. (1 Cor. x. 4.)

intend to say that it was the body, the blood, the soul, and the divinity of the Son of God? I cannot think it.

Priest. Nor I, I assure you.

Candidate. Well, then, when the words, "This is my body," "This is my blood," are pronounced, why give them a meaning that is inadmissible in other cases? Does the mouth of God affirm less positively that the circumcision was his covenant, that the roasted lamb was his passing over, and that the rock of Horeb was Christ, than when it affirms that the bread was his body, and that the wine was his blood? By what right, then, could man say to God, "On such an occasion thou hast spoken figuratively, and on such another occasion, thou hast spoken absolutely?"

Priest. It must be, however, that the body and blood of Jesus Christ should be in the Eucharist, since he who communicates unworthily is guilty both of the one and the other.[1]

Candidate. Go on, Sir, and give the reason. It is, says the Apostle, because this unworthy communicant does not discern them. And why? Because this soul is not in Christ.[2] "It is on this account," says Augustine, "that it does not spiritually eat the Saviour." It is guilty in this very thing, then, that it takes the sign and the memorial of the love of Jesus

[1] 1 Cor. xi. 29. [2] 2 Cor. xiii. 5. August. in Ps. xcviii.

without being united to Jesus by faith. That soul does it unworthily, therefore; for not having faith, it cannot discern the Saviour. Do you not think that it is so?

Priest. I hear you reason a good deal, Sir; but it is a word that is direct, simple, clear, and formal, that is wanted here, and you have not yet produced it.

Candidate. Do you think so, Sir? Well, then, here at last is the word simple and formal, that is, if you are inclined to receive it:—I was present in a town of France, at a meeting of men of literature and science, all of them members of the Church of Rome; and one of them, who was an advocate, entreated me to point out to him, if possible, a passage of Scripture, which attacked formally, and without the power of reply, the dogma of transubstantiation. I replied: The Lord Jesus, in giving the Eucharist to his disciples, said to them, "This do in remembrance of me." Now, added I, how shall one commemorate the Saviour, if the Saviour is actually present in the Eucharist? Does one recal the recollection of a person with whom one is present? I know not, Sir, whether this passage will convince you, but I know that it appeared quite satisfactory to the person who put the question.

III. The Mass.

Priest. Then you annihilate the holy sacrifice of the mass.

Candidate. Pray, have the goodness to tell me what it is, for I am a stranger in these parts.

Priest. The Eucharist subserves two ends: the one, that it may nourish our souls with the heavenly bread; the other, that the Church may have of herself a perpetual sacrifice to expiate our sins of every passing day.

In the Eucharist, therefore, there is more than a simple sacrament, there is also an oblation. Now, not only is this oblation meritorious, it is also expiatory; for this sacrifice, which takes place in the holy mass, of which it is the celebration, is absolutely the same as that of the cross, with this difference, or thereabout, that it is not bloody. The sacrifice, accordingly, is not made, but it is renewed.[1]

Candidate. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ renewed! No, Sir, never can that be true, as long as the Bible exists. Jesus Christ is God, and the unchangeable accomplishment of all things is in him. If it was necessary, in early times, that while the types and figures, which represented it, and which were mere

[1] Conc. Trid. Sess. xxii. De Sacr. Missæ. c. 1. et 3. Catech. Trid. pars iii. a. 75. *et seq.* Bellarm. De Eucharistia et De Missa. Cornelius a Lapide, in Heb. viii. 8.

shadows, should be repeated, and so the sacrifice of the passover, or any other appointed by God, should be repeated in his temple, these beggarly elements came to their end, when the sacrifice of the Lamb of God was offered, and the blood of the eternal covenant was shed for the remission of the sins of many.[1]

Ah! Sir, it was not a half-love, which the Saviour felt for his Church, when he took upon him the sins of his people.[2] No, when he took upon himself the curse, which these sins deserved,[3] it was not for some of them only. The Priest was infinite: the victim also was infinite; the expiation, which it accomplished, was that which the blood of God must accomplish: it was infinite as God is. Jesus was not, then, a mere help to his Church, but he is an infinite Saviour, for there has been nothing wanting, either in the amplitude or efficacy of the sacrifice. Therefore it is, that, to suppose this sacrifice to be repeated, is to deny that it is infinite, and, consequently, that it is the work of God himself. This, therefore, is formally to deny the eternal divinity of the Lord Jesus. Also, Sir, I fear, after what you have just told me, that the Church of Rome, by this sacrifice of the mass, as you call it, actually denies that Christ is come in the flesh.[4] For if Jesus Christ is still offer-

[1] Heb. x. 8–10. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. Heb. xiii. 20. Matt. xxvi. 28.

[2] Is. liii. 5. 1 Pet. ii. 24. [3] Gal. iii. 13. [4] 1 John iv. 1–3.

ed as a victim, it is evident that his first oblation was not sufficient. And if that first work was not sufficient, the cause of it must be, that he who did it was insufficient. Then he was not God; for every work of God is perfect. And this appears to me, Sir, to be fearful; for such an error is a heresy which strikes at the very foundation of the faith.

Priest. You are vehement, Sir; but I think I can answer you, by asking, in my turn, whether we do not every day sin, and whether, consequently, we do not need that the sacrifice of Jesus, should be prolonged, at least, (since the word repeated frightens you,) so as to wash away these new stains?[1]

Candidate. So then the Church of Rome brings down the one and perfect sacrifice of the Son of God to the earthly rank of those, of which it is written, that being merely the shadow, and not the living image of good things to come, and not being able to sanctify the comers thereunto,[2] they had to be repeated, that they might each time remove new stains.[3] How little, then, does she understand what the types of the law were, and what has been the fulfilment of them in Jesus Christ?

Priest. Also I have said that the sacrifice of the mass is, in some sort, merely a prolongation, or, we might say, a continuation[4] of that of Jesus Christ.

[1] Catech. Trid. pars ii. c. 84, 85.
[2] Heb. x. 1. [3] Heb. x. 3, 11. Lev. xvi. 34.
[4] Abrégé du Catech., &c. leçon. 37, p. 58.

Candidate. Whatever your expressions may be, you speak quite differently from what God himself does; and I prove it to you—1. You affirm that the sacrifice of the mass is expiatory; but the word of God denies it: for it says, that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin;[1] now, you yourself say, that your sacrifice of the mass is bloodless. According to the terms of Scripture, then, it is not expiatory. It cannot, therefore, wash away or remit sins. In every view of it, therefore, it is illusory.

2. You speak of a repetition, or of a prolongation, or of a continuation of the Saviour's sacrifice. But here, again, the Bible contradicts you, declaring two things. The first, that the sacrifice of the Saviour, having been offered once for all, could not be repeated. The other, that he perfectly accomplished, at one single time, all that he had to do, which renders his prolongation, or continuation of it impossible.

Priest. The question now comes to be, whether that be the sense, which the Church puts upon Scripture; for if every one interprets it in his own way, what becomes of the truth?

Candidate. Well, Sir, see what the Church of Rome says on the passages which I am going to quote. As for myself, if they are clear, I shall understand them at once, and then, with adoration, I shall believe purely and simply what the Bible says.

[1] Heb. ix. 22. Χωρὶς αἱματεκχυσίας οὐ γίνεται ἄφεσις.

Your High Priest, it tells Christians, was offered once for all. Christ does not offer himself oftentimes;[1] otherwise he must have suffered often since the foundation of the world. Here is, I think, what is formal and very clear, regarding the repetition of the Saviour's sacrifice. Your Church, then, which can say, that the daily sacrifice of the mass is the same as that, which was offered on the cross, is singularly erroneous.

And as to the continuation, as you speak of the sacrifice of Jesus, it is equally annihilated by that other Word of God: Jesus Christ, by one offering, hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified. For, "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ has been made once for all."[2] As also by this: "Jesus Christ hath appeared once for the putting away of sin."[3] You hear it, Sir,—for the putting away of sin. It is impossible then, that the sacrifice of Christ should be either repeated, or prolonged, or continued, since it was perfect, and has put away sin. The Bible, therefore, opposes your creed.

Priest. So you think, according to your Bible, that I, a priest, have neither the power, nor the right

[1] Οὐδ', ἵνα πολλάκις προσφέρῃ ἑαυτὸν. (Heb. ix. 25; vii. 28.)

[2] Ἡγιασμένοι ἐσμὲν διὰ τῆς προσφορᾶς του σώματος του Ἰησου Χριστοῦ ἐφάπαξ. (Heb. x. 10.) Μιᾷ γὰρ προσφορᾷ τετελειωκεν εἰς τὸ διηνεκὲς τοὺς ἁγιαζομένους. (Ibid. v. 14.)

[3] Εἰς ἀθέτησιν ἁμαρτιας. (Heb. ix. 26.)

to change the bread and the wine of the Eucharist into the body and the blood of Jesus Christ?

Candidate. It is written, that it is Jesus who offers himself. You have just heard it; and to imagine that man can offer that oblation; yes, that a miserable sinner, such as one of us, could offer in sacrifice, his God, the Eternal;—to imagine this, is, in my opinion, a conception of which I would admit the existence only by thinking on the depths of Satan![1] No, I cannot comprehend how a creature, especially how a poor sinner, would dare even to suppose such a thing possible.

Priest. But if Jesus Christ has given me the order and the power, when he said, Do this,[2] am I not in my duty in obeying him?

Candidate. But do you speak seriously; or rather, do you not see, that in fact these words, "Do this in remembrance of me," invite disciples to celebrate the Lord's Supper, and not a priest to sacrifice God?

Priest. Then, at that rate, you all at once condemn the adoration of the hoste, and . . . .

Candidate. Do you in fact adore the hoste?

Priest. Is it not to God that adoration belongs? And is not the hoste God himself?

Candidate. Ah, Sir, I now understand what is meant in Scriptnre by one's rending one's garments,

[1] Rev. ii. 24. [2] Conc. Trid. sess. xxii. c. 9 can. 2, 3.

when one hears something distressing. Yes; willingly would I rend mine on hearing your words, for they make me shudder. You adore the hoste! . . . Was it for this, then, that I saw the people fall on their knees in the streets and public places of some cities, when a Romish priest passed along, bearing a certain vessel?

Priest. In that vessel was the consecrated hoste; it was therefore before Jesus Christ that the faithful kneeled.

Candidate. But how are the people certain that Jesus Christ is in the hoste? I have heard say (I may be wrong), that among other things, if the hoste is not of pure wheat,—if the priest has not all the qualities requisite to consecrate it,—if he who has baptized it, has not had the intention to baptize it,—if the bishop, who has ordered it, has not had the intention to order it,—if he who celebrates the mass has not had the intention to consecrate the kinds,—if he has by inattention forgotten to pronounce the sacramental words, &c.,—that in all these cases, the hoste is not consecrated, and that, consequently, Jesus Christ is not there; that then it is merely paste.[1] How then can the people ever be sure, that they are not, in fact, adoring a bit of bread?

[1] Pictet, Theol. Chr. lib. xv. chap. 34.

Priest. Well, the intention then takes the place of the deed, and the people are not blameable.

Candidate. Poor people! from whom the memorial of the Saviour is first of all taken away, and who are next put into the peril of committing the grossest idolatry! . . . And this is not all; for I perceive that those who celebrate the Eucharist in the Romish Church are dead; and even that they take care to annihilate brotherly communion among themselves.

Priest. Tell me, if you please, all that you think; for I hear nothing but enigmas.

Candidate. Here it is then: 1. The Gospel tells me that the believer has Christ in him by faith in his head; and that it is for this reason, namely, that he is made alive through Christ, who is in him, that he communicates. It is not, then, to unite himself to Christ that he does it, since Christ is already in him; but it is to render that life always more powerful, and that union always more intimate, and to give thanks to God for it. The Romish Church, on the contrary, says to you, Communicate, that Jesus may come into thee and make thee live. If so, Christ is not in you till you take the Eucharist: your soul, therefore, is spiritually dead; for it is written, "he who hath not Christ, hath not life."[1] 2. I see that it is not with the body of Christ that you Romanists communicate; for it is apart, and alone, that each of you receives

[1] Rom. viii. 9. 1 John v. 12. 2 Cor. xiii. 5. Gal. ii. 2.

Jesus, whole, body, blood, soul, and divinity.[1] Now, the communicant, who touches another communicant, receiving another hoste, receives, in fact, another Jesus, quite entire also and complete. Each of these two communicants, then, has a Jesus of his own; but they do not partake of him between themselves; for it is impossible that Christ should be divided.

Priest. But what kind of reasoning is this? What, Sir, when you and I breathe the same air, or when we are under the same sun, are we not in communion of air, of light, and of heat?

Candidate. Particularly remark, that, in that case, none of us enjoys them apart for himself, and especially that none of us pretends to have either the air or the sun to himself, whole and entire, substance, qualities, and power. We partake of them together, it is true; but none of us has the idea of taking them whole and entire, each one for himself. So in the Lord's Supper, Sir, in that memorial of his love, which he hath left to his Church, the bread broken is divided among the Saviour's disciples; and thus, as they are, through the Holy Spirit, though many, one bread and one body, they are all partakers of that one bread.[2] So, again, as they believe that the blood of the one and perfect sacrifice of the Son of God has washed them from their sins, and has for ever delivered them from the curse; in that faith, which is that

[1] Abrégé du Catéch. &c. p. 53. [2] 1 Cor. x. 16, 17.

which God bestows on his saints,[1] they take, according to the order of Jesus, the same cup, of which they all drink. Here, Sir, is what the Holy Spirit calls the communion, which means the enjoyment, in common, of one and the same thing.[2]

At the side of this brotherly Supper, what name shall be given to the Eucharist, such as you practise it in your Church, where every one is for himself, and where there is found neither "cup of blessing," nor memorial of a completed salvation?

Priest. You do not know, I perceive, that by consecration the Eucharist becomes communion in the body and in the blood of Jesus Christ.

Candidate. Meanwhile, Sir, the Bible says, that the Supper is the communion *of* the body, and *of* the blood, and not *in* the body, and *in* the blood, which is quite another thing.[3] For, if I say that I communicate *in* the body, or *in* the blood of the Saviour, this means that I unite myself to them; but if I speak of the communion *of* the body, or *of* the blood, I express a participation of these things, in common with all other persons. It is thus, I mean by the use of these last words, that that Scripture teaches that the bread broken, and the wine

[1] Jude 3.

[2] Chrys. Hom. 10. in Jo. 1 Cor. i. 9. 2 Cor. xiii. 13. 1 John i. 3, 6, 7.

[3] Κοινωνία τοῦ αἵματος· Κοινωνία τοῦ σώματος. (1 Cor. x. 16.)

poured out, being partaken of among believers, are the symbol to them, of their enjoying in common the life and all the benefits of their Saviour. It is in the company of one another, then, and with thanksgiving, and in one same faith, and by one same spirit, that they break this bread, and that they take and drink this cup.

What a difference, Sir, between these two celebrations! Is not yours, even in your own eyes, a work that is incomplete, timorous, disjointed, and without brotherliness; and do you not see, on the contrary, the freedom of grace, and the joy of gratitude in the evangelical Eucharist, which the believer celebrates, to tell of the Lord's benefits?

Priest. And, also, I think to appease God?[1]

Candidate. What! is not God appeased already? When the Israelite celebrated the passover, every year, it was not to obtain of God that the destroying angel should not touch his house; but to call to mind a deliverance long ago obtained, and to give thanks for it. So it is not to appease our gracious heavenly Father, that we, his children, break the bread, and take the cup of the Lord; but it is to give thanks to our God, for that "he spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us to the death of the cross;"[2] and it is that at the same time, we may exhort and encourage one another, to consecrate our-

[1] Abrégé du Catéch. &c. leçon 37. [2] Rom. viii. 31.

selves, with sincerity of heart, to the service of our God.

It is in love, accordingly, and not in fear, that we celebrate the Lord's Supper. Yes, it is as being already redeemed by his precious blood, that we bless his holy name together; and that, while we give to one another the cup of salvation, we magnify the tender mercies of our heavenly Father, which are above all his works, and better than life.[1]

Priest. So that, if I have rightly understood you, you consider the Eucharist, which the Church of Rome celebrates, as an anti-apostolical institution, transubstantiation as subtilizing, contrary to the Word of God, and the holy sacrifice of the mass as contrary at once to the divinity of Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine of grace.

Candidate. I most particularly thank you, Sir, for the attention you have given me. You have just recapitulated, in a few words, all that I have said.

Priest. According to your system, pray what do you make of the conformity of the Church in the first ages, with the usages of the Church of Rome?

I was going to reply, when, the service being ended, several priests entered the sacristy. I therefore took leave of him, who had given me such an obliging reception; and next day, I sent him some

[1] Ps. cxlv. 9; lxiii. 3. Isa. lxiii. 5.

notes on the pretended conformity of the primitive Church, with the doctrines of the Romish Church regarding the Supper. The following is an extract:

VARIATIONS.

If a great part of the apostolical Fathers have called the Lord's Supper the body and blood of Jesus Christ, and if, in speaking of it also, they have sometimes employed the word *sacrifice*, it is easy to satisfy one's self, that they never thought, that either the bread or the wine of the Supper changed their nature by the consecration; or that a sacrifice took place in the celebration of the Eucharist, or that the cup should be kept from the people. Here are the proofs of all this.

1. The idea of a sacrifice in the Supper is very expressly repelled by Justin Martyr (year 167), by Tertullian (216), by Minutius Felix (235), by Origen (254,) by Arnobius (290), by Lactantius (325), and by other Fathers of the four first centuries. The pagans accused the Christians of impiety, chiefly because they had neither altars, nor sacrifices. These Fathers, in their apologies, or in their answers, showed them, that the sacrifice, which they offered to God, is that of their prayers, and that their heart is their altar, and that they have no other in their

temples, because their worship is altogether spiritual, even, say they, when they commemorate the death of Christ.

With these testimonies of the Fathers of the first ages, where are we to put even the idea of the sacrifice of the mass? What opposition to this doctrine did not the whole Church of those times show to it?

2. And regarding transubstantiation, and the taking away the cup from the people, see if it be possible to impute the thought of it to them.

Justin Martyr calls the bread and the chalice, the memorial of the flesh and of the blood of the Son of God.[2] Clement of Alexandria (220), says that the wine represents, in allegory, the Word, which was shed for many, for the remission of sins.[3] Tertullian says, "When Jesus Christ distributed the bread to his disciples, he made it his body, that is to say, the figure of his body."[4] Macarius (350), speaks "of the bread and of the wine, which are the figure of the body and of the blood of Jesus Christ; for it is spiritually," says he, "that the flesh of the Lord is eaten."[5] Ephraim, Patriarch of Antioch (360),

[1] Just. Mart. Apol. ii. p. 58. Cont. Tryph. p. 238, 239, 240. Minut. Fel. in Octav. Orig. Cont. Cels. lib. viii. Tert. Apol. c. 30, et 39. Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. vii. Arnob. Cont. Gent. lib. vii. in init. Lact. Inst. lib. vii. c. 25, &c. Larrogue, Hist. de l'Euchar. part i. ch. 8.

[2] Cont. Tryph. p. 296.

[3] Pædag. lib. ii. c. 2.

[4] Cont. Marc. lib. iv. c. 40.

[5] Homil. 27.

employs the same language. Basil (379), said, "What we eat and drink, is to recal to mind him who is risen again for us."[1] "The Eucharist," says Gaudentius (410), is a token of his presence, and a representation of his suffering, that we may have an indelible remembrance of our redemption."[2] As a friend, says Jerome (420), when parting, leaves a token to his friend; so has Jesus Christ left to us, his last commemoration in this sacrament.[3] But, says Theodoret (457), after his coming, we shall have no more need of the symbols of his body, since the body itself will appear. The Saviour has made a change of name, in giving to his body the name of the symbol, and to the symbol the name of his body; and, as he has called himself a vine branch, he has also called the symbol his blood.[4] It is with this idea that Augustine (430), remarks, that people do not engage in a commemoration of one that is present. And elsewhere, the Lord made no difficulty in saying, "This is my body," when he gave the sign of his body.[5]

The two Gelasiuses, both the Pope of that name, (490), and his contemporary of Cysicum, declare

[1] De Bapt. c. 2. [2] Gaud. tr. 2. Bib. Patr. tome ii.
[3] Hieron. in 1 Cor. xi.
[4] Theod. in 1 Cor. xi. Dialog. 1.
[5] Serm. in Ps. xxxvii. Cont. Adim. c. 12.

that the image and the figure of the blood of Christ are celebrated in the mysteries.[1]

Facundus, bishop of Hermione (533), expresses the same sentiments. We call them, says he, the body and the blood of Jesus Christ, not that the bread is properly his body, nor the wine properly his blood, but because they contain the mystery, &c.[2]

The bread and the wine, say Isidore of Seville (636), and the venerable Bede (735), have a mystical relation to the body and blood of Jesus Christ.[3]

Finally, the Catholic, that is to say, the Universal Church, being assembled in the year 754, in a Council of 338 bishops at Constantinople, expressed itself in these terms: "Jesus Christ having taken the bread and the wine, said, This is my body, and this is my blood, do this in commemoration of me, as there was not under heaven any other kind of substance that might be chosen by him, nor any other figure, that could represent his incarnation. Behold, then, the resemblance of his life-giving body, honourably and gloriously presented to us."[4]

[1] De Duab. Nat. See Dispute de la Messe, p. 450.

[2] Facundus, lib. ix. p. 404.

[3] Isid. Hisp. Orig., lib. vi. c. 19. Beda, Comm. in Marc., lib. xiv.

[4] Conc. Const. in Act. Conc. Nicæn, c. ii. act. 6. See Hist. Abr. des Sent. des Doct. de l'Egl. des premiers siècles. Pictet, Théol. Chrét., lib. xiv. ch. 35.

To these testimonies I added the sentiments of several Doctors from the bosom of the Church of Rome herself. I quoted, also, the Emperor Charlemagne (770), who wrote, that "Jesus Christ, when he was supping with his disciples, broke the bread, and gave them likewise the cup, as the figure of his body and of his blood."[1] I quoted, likewise, Rabanus Maurus, bishop of Mentz (820), who, among other things, says: "Some having imagined, that, in the sacrament of the body and blood of the Lord, are found the very same body and the very same blood of Christ, which were derived from the Virgin Mary, I have written against that error, and shown what should be believed on that subject."[2] I referred, moreover, to Ratram, a priest of the monastery of Corbie (860), who wrote a very remarkable treatise, "On the body and blood of the Lord," and in which it is proved, that the mystery of the Eucharist is a figure, and not the body itself, nor the blood of Jesus Christ. I quoted Amalaric, also, a celebrated Doctor (1207), who taught, that the real body of Jesus Christ was no more in the bread of the altar, than in any other bread. I reminded him, that three Cardinals, Cajetan, the Bishop of Rochester, and Cameracensis; that several Doctors, Scotus, Biel, Melchior Canus, Vasquez, and even

[1] Ad. Alc. Epist. in Sept. [2] Penetential, Ingolstadt, 1616.

the Cardinal du Perron, declared, that Transubstantiation had nothing but tradition to support it.[1] Finally, I farther referred to the Cardinal d'Ailly (1425), who, in the Council of Constance, spoke of transubstantiation, as of an opinion that could not be clearly inferred from Scripture; and to the Cordelier, Ockham (1325), who thought, that the opinion, which, in the Eucharist, leaves to the bread its own substance, would be the most rational, if the Church had not decided to the contrary.

I concluded these notes by recalling to mind two things: 1st, That the dogma of transubstantiation was of very recent date: That if the monk, Paschase Ratbert, in 851, had first put forth the opinion, that "what is received in the Supper, is the very flesh which was born of the virgin Mary;" it was not till 1215, in a Lateran Council, a Council which the Gallican Church rejects, that Pope Innocent III. gave form to the dogma, created its name, and imposed it on the Church of Rome.[2]

2. The other fact, of which I reminded him, was, that it was not till the 15th century, and by the Council of Constance, (1415), that Communion[3] under the two kinds was abolished by a decree, which

[1] Caj. in 3 Thom. 9. 75, a. 1. Roch. Cont. Captio. Babyl. c. 10. Comer. in 4 Sent. 9, 6, litt. *f.* Mel. Can. Loc. comm. lib. iii. c. 3. Vasq. tom. iii. in 3 dist. 180, c. 5. Traité de l'Euchar. p. 793.

[2] Basnage, Hist. de l'Egl. liv. xxvii. § 6. [3] Sess. xiii.

bears, "that, although Jesus Christ had instituted this venerable Sacrament after supper, and had administered it under the two kinds, and although the Church had so observed it till then; yet the Council, assembled by the Holy Spirit, decreed, that from that time, and in future, those only who officiated should receive the two kinds; but the laity, that of the bread only; ordaining, that every heretic who should dare to advance any contrary sentiment, should be banished, and punished by the Inquisitors," &c.

The immediate result of this new dogma was, that John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, were burned alive, "for having maintained, according to the Bible, that Christians ought, in the Holy Supper, to take the cup as well as the bread!!"

I have not been able to learn, reader, what were the internal reflections of the priest, with whom I had spoken; but my own, after this conversation, have been only thanksgiving, and blessing, and praise to the Lord Jesus, that in his mercy he has given me His Supper, such as he instituted it, and that he makes me daily see more powerfully, its apostolical truth and august holiness.

Am I blameable then, reader, if I still think, and think anew, that I ought not to change my creed for the usages of the Romish Church?

THIRD VISIT.

BAPTISM, AND THE FIVE ORDINANCES, WHICH, ALSO, THE CHURCH OF ROME CALLS SACRAMENTS.

It is here, reader, that I ought to explain to you, in detail, the doctrines and usages which the Church of Rome has shewn me on Baptism, and on the Five Ordinances, to which, also, that Church gives the name of sacraments,[1] but for the sake of brevity, I shall say only a few words on them.

Above, and before all, I remark, that, as it was the Lord Jesus, the only King and Head of his Church, who chose and called his apostles; it was He also, who, with his own mouth, and by his own direct and divine authority, instituted Baptism, and the Supper, and that it was he also, who, as Master, commanded his disciples "to baptize all nations, and teach them to keep all his commandments."[2]

Here, then, is the special character of the Sacraments, namely, that it was the Saviour himself that instituted them. He did not charge his apostles to do it; it was he alone who did it; and moreover, he confirmed them by his example, since he caused him-

[1] Viz. Confirmation, Penance, Extreme unction, Orders, and Marriage.

[2] Matt. xxviii. 20.

self to be baptized by John, and with his own Almighty hands dispensed the first Supper.

What am I to investigate, then, first of all, regarding the Ordinances, of which the Romish Church tells me, that they also are sacraments? Shall I tell her, that the Lord Jesus instituted them directly, formally, and solely for his Church, as he has done Baptism and the Supper, and as he had formerly done Circumcision and the Passover? No; the Church of Rome replies. Well, perhaps, he has participated in the five Ordinances, of which you speak to me; so that they might have propped themselves upon this? No; that Church again replies.

But perhaps they have been revealed to the apostles, in such a way, that they have afterwards enjoined them on the Church, as a positive command of the Lord?

We cannot say so, add the Doctors of Rome. But this does not prevent these ordinances from being divine, for it is thus that the Church has interpreted Scripture, and that she has always decreed.[1] Always! say you,—this is what the Fathers and the Doctors might tell us, if we asked them. But, to get on a little more quickly, have the goodness to tell me what you think regarding the efficacy, and the necessity of Baptism?

[1] Bellarm. De Sac. Confirm. Idem De Pœnit. De Extr. Unct. De Sacram. Ordin. Conc. Trid. sess. xxiv. c. 1. De Matrim. Bellarm. De. Matrim. Sacram.

"It is Baptism by water," replies the Romish Church, "that takes away original sin, and there is no salvation without it. Also the little infant, were he still in his mother's womb, who dies without being baptized, is for ever excluded from seeing God."[1]

Who told you that? I reply. Where has Scripture taught it? Does it not say, on the contrary, that it is not water baptism, but that of the Spirit, that takes away the sin of the soul? And does it not also say, that the children of believers are under the same promise of God as their parents?[2] Why, then, teach that the little infant, who dies without having voluntarily sinned, as Adam did,[3] if he die because of the sin, that is in his body, should also and necessarily perish? Regarding his soul, may he not be in the election of God? and also, may not the eye of the Spirit of the Saviour be upon him, as they were upon Jeremiah, and upon John the Baptist, from their mothers' womb?[4] At least, is it not better to be silent on the subject, as Scripture has been silent?

And also, I ask the Church of Rome, regarding the form of this sacrament, why, rejecting the institution, so simple and so easy, in which the Lord Jesus himself participated, that pure water, the sym-

[1] Catech. Conc. Trid. pars ii. c. 2. De Baptismo, Conc. Trid. sess. vii. c. 6. Bellarm. De Bapt. lib. i. c. 4.

[2] Acts ii. 39; 1 Cor. vii. 14. [3] Rom. v. 14.

[4] Jer. i. 5. Luke i. 15.

bol of the Word and Spirit of God, and that sole and august invocation of the name of Jehovah, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,—why have you substituted all these practices and ceremonies, which you at that time perform on a little infant?

What, in the sight of God, mean that oil, which you mingle with the baptismal water; that exorcism, which you pronounce over the infant; that salt, which you put in his mouth; that sign of the cross, which you make on him; that saliva, with which you anoint him; that renunciation of the world, that confession of faith; and that request to be baptised, which you require of him; that perfume, which you put on his head; that white garment, with which you invest him; that burning taper, which you put in his hand; and every thing else that you add to these practices? If you made no more account of this, than as a voluntary ceremony on your own part, still I would ask you, what is its efficacy? But you say these things are of God, and that you are under a sacred obligation to impose them on his Church!!—Church of Rome! in this I cannot approve thee. No, the word of God does not permit me to participate in these things.

That word prevents me also from receiving as sacraments, the other five Ordinances of which that Church speaks. In the Holy Scriptures, I do not see them more or less enjoined on the Church. On the contrary, does not the word of God show me the error, or the vanity of them?

What relation is there, indeed, between the Lord's laying his hands on little children,[1] or between the gifts and graces, which the Holy Spirit sheds abroad in a believing soul, and the anointing with perfumed oil, the sign of the cross, and the breathing employed by a Romish bishop, when he confirms a child of ten or twelve years of age,[2] and by which things, says the Church of Rome, that child is rendered a perfect Christian, and receives abundance of the graces and gifts of the Holy Spirit?[3]

What relation can I recognize between the free and absolute pardon, which the Lord Jesus bestowed on the sinful woman, or on the paralytic; or between the commission, with which he invested the apostles, to preach, and to confirm in his name, the remission of sins; and that sacrament of penance, which, says the Romish Church, remits the sins committed after baptism, and in which there is, in particular, the confession of them, which must be made in the ear of the priest?[4]

Again, what relation can I perceive between the anointing with oil, of which the Scripture speaks, and which was either the symbol of a miraculous gift, or the employment of remedies, or perhaps the figur-

[1] Catech. Conc. Trid. par i. c. 3. 60. De Baptismo.

[2] Abrégé du Catéch, &c. leçon. 31.

[3] Abrégé du Catéch., &c. p. 59. I shall return afterwards to Auricular Confession.

[4] James v. 14, 15. Mark vi. 13.

ative expression of spiritual anointing by the Holy Ghost, and which, in every way, has relation to the healing of the sick,—and extreme unction, which, if it concern the health of the body, has principally for its object, the completely purifying of the sick from his sins, and the fortifying of him against the assaults of the devil.[1]

And what relation can I establish between the laying on of the hands of the apostle Paul on Timothy; or that which other ministers of the Word have received by the hands of the Presbytery; or between the miraculous gift, which the Saviour bestowed on the apostles, when he breathed upon them, saying, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost,"[2] and that sacrament of holy orders, which also is divided into greater orders, and less orders, and which establishes a hierarchy, of which the Book of God never spoke.[3]

Finally; what relation does the Bible point out to me between marriage, which concerns the whole human race, or even between what St. Paul says regarding the union of Christ with the Church, which union he calls a great mystery;[4] and a sacrament, says the Church of Rome, which is such as is indissoluble, while those who receive it, without being in

[1] Catéch. Conc. Trid. pars ii. c. 6. De Extr. Unct. Sacram. Abrégé du Catéch, &c. p. 70.

[2] 2 Tim. i. 6. Acts viii. 18. 1 Tim. iv. 14. Heb. vi. 2.

[3] John xx. 22, 23.

[4] Catech. Conc. Trid. pars ii. c. 7. Conc. Trid. sess. xxiii.

a state of grace, profane it, and render themselves unworthy of the Divine blessing.[1]

What! Has not the Lord said, that marriage may be dissolved because of adultery?[2] And has he not said also, that "marriage is honourable among all men?"[3] Is there no earthly blessing then, shed by the Creator on an honourable marriage, even among the nations of the world? In this, then, I cannot approve of the doctrine of Rome. The Bible holds quite another language. Reader, am I deceiving myself in seeing as I do?

FOURTH VISIT.

WORSHIP OF THE VIRGIN MARY, OF THE SAINTS, OF IMAGES, RELICS, &c.

I. *Pilgrimage.*

On one of the loftiest summits of Mount Etzel, at the eastern extremity of the lake of Zurich, rises the little Chapel of St. Meinard, held in great veneration

[1] Ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω εἰς Χριστὸν, καὶ εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν. (Eph. v. 32.)

[2] Cat. Conc. Trid. pars ii. c. 8. Abrégé du Catech, &c. p. 71.

[3] Matt. xix. 9. Τίμιος ὁ γάμος ἐν πᾶσι. (Heb. xiii. 4.)

by the Romish Church, and which is, as it were, the gate, by which you enter the wild valley, whence, at some distance, is seen the ancient abbey of Notre-Dame des Ermites. Every year innumerable multitudes of pilgrims come together from all quarters into these consecrated places, and there is seen, in all its pomp and abandonment, that worship, which the Church of Rome renders to the Virgin Mary, to angels and saints, and to images and relics of every kind.

I was returning from the north of Switzerland. I had passed through the melancholy and deserted city of Constance. I had there worshipped the Saviour in the very dungeons of John Huss, and of Jerome of Prague. I had blessed him in that hall, where an impious and murderous council was held, and opposite to those seats, which a perfidious emperor and pope had occupied. I had given him thanks, on the spot, for ever memorable, where were lighted up the funeral piles of these two faithful martyrs of the Bible.

My soul was full of thanksgiving to him, who hath given me his word, and I wished to con over, in my heart, all that is involved in such a benefit, on the very places where, three centuries before, the Spirit of God revealed them, by that very Word, to the sincere and learned Zuinglius, at that time a preacher of the celebrated monastery, which I was

come to visit.[1] It was on the morning of a bright and lovely day. I was resting myself on an open rising ground, whence the view extended on the lengthened banks of the lake, and on the plains and mountains which surround it, and which bound the horizon.

Bands of pilgrims, newly arrived from the cities, the towns, and the villages of Alsace, of Brisgau, of the Black Forest, of Swabia, and even of Hungary and Austria, crowded the steep pathway, where, for eight centuries, multitudes of such travellers, of every rank and age, have passed in succession. Old men, mothers with their babes, men and youths slowly ascended the strait and stony route, and every one according to the form of devotion he had chosen.

Here, a man already bent to the ground under a load of years, bore on his neck a thick yoke, and of

[1] Ulrich Zwingle, or Zuinglius, born 1484, at Wildhaus in Tackenbourg, in Switzerland, studied at Bâle, and after being curate of Glaris for ten years, was, in 1516, called to be preacher at Notre-Dame des Ermites (Einsiedlen,) in the Canton of Schwitz. It was there principally, that having read devoutly and with prayer, the Holy Scriptures, he was enlightened on the nature of the doctrines of the Romish Church, and began that Reformation which he afterwards prosecuted with zeal at Zurich, and which soon extended itself over several Cantons of Switzerland.

See "Histoire de la Reformation du dix-huitieme siècle," par Merle-d'Aubigné, tom. ii. p. 362, &c., where there is to be found the most authentic and interesting account of that remarkable epoch.

the heaviest wood; there, a young woman inclined her head under a huge stone, with which she had loaded herself at the foot of the mountain; another man had his feet bridled with shackles; another was loaded with a heavy cross made of two planks of wood; an aged woman, all trembling, painfully prosecuted her way, with her hands tied together; another woman had her face covered with a black cloth, and was groping her way; while another of these disciples advanced three steps only after retreating two.

II. *Worship of the Virgin Mary.*

The chapel bell sounded, and the prayer was uttered. The words were these:

"Blessed Mother of God, always virgin; Princess of Heaven; Queen of men; Empress of angels; sole and sovereign Mistress of the universe; Refuge of sinners; Gate of Heaven; Mother of mercies and light of the world, which you made, which you preserve and govern; we prostrate ourselves before you, we adore you, and we supplicate you and the holy apostles, St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. Andrew, and with them all the saints, to look towards us, your unworthy and miserable servants and handmaidens, who live only through your love! Spouse of the living God, Lamp of grace, to whom God hath given the right to exercise kindness and mercy, save us! for

without your pity, we are lost. In you alone is the hope of life."[1]

This prayer was followed with a chant, in which St. Meinard was invoked and praised with the angels and several saints; and as these pilgrims approached the chapel, they prostrated themselves, kissing the dust, while they muttered new prayers.

In this style the bands proceeded one after another. They then took their way in order toward the abbey, whither the supernatural image of the Blessed Virgin attracted them, and where her worshippers were to obtain miraculous cures, with the absolution of all their sins.

I have seen it with my eyes, reader; I myself have walked among these pilgrims; I was at their worship and their festival; I followed their adorations; I attended their ceremonies and their practices; I con-

[1] Jardin du Rosaire, at the beginning. Especially see all the following, "Conformité des Ceremonies modernes avec les anciennes, 1667, Bost. Doctrine de l'Ecriture-Sainte sur le Culte de Marie; Paris, 1835. Rome Païenne; Paris, 1838. Anatomie de la Messe, par P. du Moulin. Le Prosélyte Evangelique, par Gilles de Gaillard; 1648. De la Créance des Pères sur le fait des Images, par J. Daillé; 1641. See also, Avis aux Dévots indiscrets de la Vierge, par l'Eveque de Tournay. Office de la Vierge. litany. Psautier de Bonaventure. De Salo, Salasar, Crasset, Costerus, Bernard de Bustis, Alain, &c. De Bustis says, that "God himself is under submission to the Virgin Mary." (Pictet. Theol. Chret. liv. xii ch. 31.) Basn. Hist. Eccles. liv. xviii. ch. ii. Cheminais, Serm. t. ii. p. 142, 145, &c.

versed with several of them, and I was able to ascertain in this way, and even in detail, all that the Church of Rome invites me to do, in asking me to enter her bosom.

No doubt, as in the pagan days of Athens, of Rome, or of Gaul, some cultivated minds despised the gross superstitions of idolatry, leaving them to the ignorant and the simple; so at this day, in the Church of Rome, many of her doctrines and practices are weakened and set aside by the higher class of society, who abandon them to the vulgar. "But the vulgar is the people, and the people is humanity, and it is for the good of humanity that the religion of God is given to the world. If, then, to leave the people in ignorance of this benefit is the most culpable injustice, what name shall we give to the crime, by which the people, that is to say again, the human race, is deceived by lies, or crushed under the weight of practices which lead away from Jesus, at the very time that his cross is pointed out to them?"

Such were my thoughts while I was passing along the road, which separates the chapel of Meinard from Notre-Dame des Ermites. In a short time the valley, where the monastery is situate, opened before me, and in the midst of it I saw the town of Einsiedlen, overtopped by the church and the numerous buildings of the abbey, and surrounded by oratories and altars for the Corpus Christi procession, and chapels, which inclosed the routes on all sides.

This day was the eve of the festival of the Virgin. Already thousands of worshippers, whose number was every moment increasing, were met in front of her image, exhibited to their veneration, in one of the chapels of the abbey.

This image is supernatural. So I am told by the "authentic and faithful history of Einsiedlen," which was sold for a few halfpence, with legends, little statues, and images of the Virgin, crucifixes, rosaries, vestments, and many other objects that had been blessed in the magazines and numerous stalls, which could scarcely suffice the avidity of the pilgrims.

"This image," the history told me, "was sent from heaven, by B. H., herself a virgin, who appeared to the Bishop of Constance, in the tenth century, while he was preparing to consecrate the church and the monastery, which the Virgin had already consecrated.[1] Then the Lord Jesus descended from heaven, and, in this church, celebrated in person the first mass, assisted by St. Stephen the martyr and by St. James. A bull of Pope Leo VIII. confirmed all these prodigies,[2] and, from that time, miracles without number, glorious apparitions of the Virgin and of several saints, have served but to augment the holiness of this place, where the divine image of the Mother of God, of the Queen of angels, has wrought

[1] Hartm. Ann. Einsiedl. p. 54.

[2] Histoire de la Reformation du dix-huitieme siècle, tom. ii. p. 398.

cures the most unheard of, and where the Virgin, the angels and saints have, by their sovereign and efficacious intercession, procured for all the devout pilgrims who resort thither, the most entire absolution of all their sins."

The adoration of the multitude was at its height. On their knees before the chapel of the Virgin, and on the spacious square, where it is situate, a whole people directed to the image their respects, the kissing of hands, their homages, their chants and their prayers, and fervently paid it their most humble and devoted worship. Never, in his temple at Jerusalem, was the mighty and living God adored with more solemnity and submission; and never did his priests, his Levites, and his singers, serve him with more pomp and more reverence, than the priests of the image rendered their homage, and praised and celebrated that image before an attentive multitude.

And this idol (for is it any thing else?) was not a solitary one. The statues and images of angels and saints were every where adjoining those of the Lord Jesus in the church and chapels, on the square of the town, in its streets, along its high roads, in every house, and in every chamber; and every where men, women, and children made their salutations, prostrated themselves, kneeled, recited short prayers, or chanted litanies.

I suffered more than words of mine can tell, and more than once I burst into tears of sorrow. In

vain I tried to force myself to excuse such devotions, saying to myself, that this homage was merely an honour paid, and not an adoration,[1] and that even this honour had a final reference to God. This excuse always vanished away before the idolatry of this multitude, and it was at last entirely taken away, when, by some conversations with the pilgrims of different classes, and with those also who taught them and preached to them, I distinctly understood both the doctrine of the Romish Church on this point, and the intentions and sentiments of the worshippers, whom I saw with my own eyes.

These told me generally, "that they believed, from the heart, that they were seen and heard by the Virgin Mary, and by the saints as well as by the angels; that they were certain that the Virgin is all-powerful in heaven and on earth; that she has sovereign authority with God, even above her Son; that it is she alone who dispenses the graces of salvation, and that nothing is impossible to her; that she particularly loves those who serve her; that she guards and protects them; that she cures them and comforts them; and that she obtains of God for them a full pardon, exemption from purgatory, and eternal paradise."

I asked them if they believed that her image was any thing else than a piece of lifeless wood, and of

[1] Abrégé du Catéch, &c., p. 33.

no value; and they replied by exclaiming, "That this image was celestial and living, though it does not appear so to the eye; that it was with it as with the hoste, 'where God exists bodily and in life, though this is not perceived;' that it had been seen more than once to move the eyes and smile, and even that a holy old man, who was named, had distinctly heard it speak."

I then asked these Christians, is it not then this image that you invoke? Is it not before it that you prostrate yourselves, and from it that you expect cures and deliverances? And every one answered, that such was his belief and firm hope.

The priests, as I have already said, are more sober-minded in general, but there are some of them who go as far as the people. "It is true," said one of them to me, "we invoke the Holy Virgin, the angels, and the saints, but it is to obtain, through their intercession and merits, the favours and succours that are needful for us, and so to put ourselves under their powerful protection; and how should we not do it, since the Blessed Virgin is the Queen of Heaven, since the angels continually behold the face of God, and since the saints also enjoy the beatific vision?

"Is it not at once rational," continued he, "and honourable to God, that we approach these friends of God: the Holy Virgin, who is the blessed beneficent Mother of the Saviour: saints, who have served him on earth, and angels who serve him in the

heavens;—since they aid us with God himself, who is the Sovereign Monarch of us all? What order can be conceived more beautiful, and, at the same time, more favourable to man, who is weak, sinful, and timid?

"Yet think not," added he "that for all this we forget that Jesus Christ is our sole and only Mediator. He is our Mediator of redemption, while the Virgin and the saints are merely mediators of intercession;[1] and when the saints obtain for us of God, through their prayers, favours and succour, it is only because they rest upon the perfect and infinite merits of Jesus Christ."[2]

So that priest spoke to me. But it was quite at variance with what I heard next day in the church. The temple, which is vast indeed, and the square in its neighbourhood, were filled with people without number. At first the service of the Virgin was performed with the most pompous ceremonies of adoration, and praises the most exalted. When it was ended, a priest mounted the pulpit, and, with equal zeal and copiousness, pronounced the eulogium of the Virgin. I cannot repeat his discourse; but the

[1] Abrégé du Catéch, &c., p. 47.

[2] Conc. Trid. Sess. xxv. De invocat-Sanct. Catech. Conc. Trid. pars iii. De cultu et invoc. Sanct. § 16, &c. Bellarm. de cultu Sanctor, totus liber. Idem, De Sanct. Beatitud. lib. i. c. 19. Abrégé du Catéch, &c., leçon. 29.

sense of it is very faithfully contained in what follows:—

"What shall become of the soul that does not recognise the majesty, divine, adorable, and almighty of the thrice holy and blessed Virgin? Where shall that soul appear for salvation, if it thus turn aside from the Queen of the Heavens, from her, whose name is above every name, who is the Mediatress of the whole of salvation; the eternal principle of happiness and of life, and on whom the whole universe, angels and men, fix their regards, and their adoration?[1]

"Is it not in her that God has manifested the glory of his power and of his mercy, and placed all the treasures of his love?[2] Believers, contemplate them with me, and possess them for yourselves!

"I see, first of all, her immaculate conception. The angel Gabriel appears to her mother, and choirs of angels make merry and rejoice in the heavens.[3] At her birth, which was without pain, the brightness of the sun is doubled, the moon shines like the sun, the angels descend in a throng around her cradle, and the heavenly babe is already delighted with their

[1] The reader will be able to verify the assertions of his discourse by consulting the references subjoined. The Jesuit Poiré, "La triple couronne de la Vierge, cité par le Prosel. Evang. part ii. sect. 130, p. 12, &c.

[2] La triple Couronne, &c.

[3] Bernard de Bustis, Serm. 8, De Nativit. Mar. Basn. Hist. de l'Egl. liv. xviii. ch. 11.

concerts.[1] Also, from that blessed day forward, every year, that birth, altogether divine, has been celebrated in the heavens by the blessed and the holy angels; as also on earth, excommunication and secular chastisements were inflicted on the profane, who denied its heavenly nature.[2]

"I next see her assumption. She died; I grant it: though sin had no part in her. But forty days after she rises again; and, on the 15th of the month of August, the angels bear her in triumph into the heavens, her abode and her throne.[3] Who is this who ascends, I then exclaim with the ancient Church, who rises like aurora, fair as the moon, clear as the son, terrible as an army with banners?[4] Ah! it is this day that the garden of Eden receives the living paradise of the new Adam; this Mother of the living God, but always a Virgin; this temple of the incorrputible.[5] What do I say? Is it not a goddess which the heavens are receiving? Is it not thus that the thrice holy Father, Leo X., calls her?[6] And

[1] Basn. Pelbarte de Themeswart, Stellar. lib. v. p. 1. a. 3. Basnage, p. 1083.

[2] This is what happened to the Dominican, John de Moncon. Maimb. Histoire du Schisme d'Occident, tome i. liv. iii. p. 236; year 1387, quoted by Basnage.

[3] Basn. Hist. de l'Egl. liv. xviii. ch. 11. § 5, 6, &c.

[4] Brev. Rom. ad laudes fest. Aug. p. 987. Basnage, p. 1087.

[5] Brev. Rom. lect. iv. 15. Aug. p. 984, lect. v. p. 985 et 987.

[6] Card. Bemb. lib. viii. ep. 17. Prosel. Evang. part ii. p. 9.

what is she going to do in heaven? I ask. A new Esther, she is going to receive from God the half of the kingdom of the universe, as the most learned Doctors have declared;[1] and, also, that the court of heaven may adore her and obey her, as the one who has merited, by her works, all the glory which is for ever acquired for her.[2]

"Let her be praised, then, not more, as when she was here below, for what God did for her; but let her be praised and adored for all that she has done for God.[3] Or rather, her glory is above all glory, and it is God alone that is above her, and he alone is able worthily to make her eulogy.[4] Abase thyself in her presence, then, thou Church, who adorest her! Abase thyself, thou world entire! Ye heavens, and thou earth, humble yourselves before Mary!

"Do you not see her established above the kingdoms, which she directs and governs? Do not kings themselves acknowledge it? Did not Louis XIII. say to her, 'I shall reign only if thou reignest?'[5]

[1] Gab. Biel. in Can. Miss. lect. 80, Confugimus, &c. The Jesuit Barradas, Conc. Evang. t. i. lib. vi. ch. 11.

[2] Le P. Cheminais, Serm. tome ii. p. 142, &c.

[3] Le P. d'Orleans, Serm. tome ii. p. 62, 97, 99. Paris, 1696.

[4] Cardin. Bona. De div. Psal. c. 12, § 1. Basnage, p. 1088.

[5] Represented in the procession of the Jesuits of Luxembourg, in 1685. (Basnage, p. 1089.) The reader recollects, that in Spain, Don Carlos put his person and his army under the sovereign protection of the Virgin, before whose image the colours were lowered.

Do you not see her do whatever she pleases in heaven and on earth, muliplying unheard-of miracles, overturning armies, delivering cities, driving away the plague, repelling famine, striking her enemies with death, granting all prayers, appearing to her worshippers, and, to say all in a word, descending from the heavens with her most holy Son, in this very place:—yes, ye faithful, on this very spot of ground where I now speak, and where she deigns to receive you, there to place her sublime and living image, and there to fix for ever her abode, and all the efficacy of her gifts, and of her imperishable favours.[1]

"Again; what assurance have you not of pardon in her? If even reprobate souls pray to her from the depths of hell to deliver them, what would you not obtain through her favour? Ah! believe it! if the foolish virgins, instead of addressing themselves to the Son, had spoken to his mother, the door would have unquestionably been opened to them;[2] for she would have obtained it of her Son, by the maternal right which she possesses.[3]

"Happy, then, you, ye faithful! in rendering to her your adorations. If it be God, to whom public

[1] Brev. Rom. Caud. fest Aug. Le P. d'Orl. Serm. tome ii. p. 88.

[2] Cardin. Bona De div. Psal. p. 307, c. 12, § 1. Le P. Crasset, tr. i. p. 100. Basnage, p. 1091.

[3] Basn. p. 1082.

worship belongs, it is to the Virgin that you owe *more* than public worship: yes, absolute adoration, by the submission of your hearts, which you ought to humble in her presence, and which you cannot sufficiently and unreservedly enough devote to her all your love, and all your obedience, and all your fervour.[1] Happy, also, if you approach her holy relics, her veil, her comb, her distaff, her slipper, her ring, her milk![2] Happy, if her image is dear to you, and if every day you address your homage to her!"[3]

It was nearly in these terms that the preacher expressed himself. The people who heard him were transported, and the rest of the day was occupied by this multitude in processions, adorations of angels and saints, congratulations on the result of such a pilgrimage, and on the full pardon derived from it, and which was also to be imparted to relations and friends, who could not visit the image, except by intention and in mind.

At that time, reader, the anguish of my soul was extreme. I wept before the Lord Jesus, whom I had seen despised and trodden under foot, to such excess and with such hardihood. I moaned and mourned over the slavery, in which I saw this poor

[1] Brev. Rom. Le Pros. Evang. sect. 129, 130. Basn. Hist de l'Egl. liv. xviii. ch. 11.

[2] Poiré, La triple Couronne de la Vierge. Le Prosel. Evang. part ii. p. 22, &c.

[3] Ibid.

people chained down by Satan; and I thought, also, on ancient days, those days, when the faithful voice of Zuinglius made itself be heard in these very places.

This last thought deeply affected me, and it seemed to me that the imposing and holy voice of that Christian, of that Minister of the Truth, was elevated anew on that place, and before that very idol, where it had so often of old resounded, and that, filling the valley with its accents of truth, it summoned the multitude to listen, and that these accents answered the preacher of the day in these terms:

"'Fool!' shall I say to thee with St. Paul,[1] 'who hath bewitched thee to such an extent, as to put the flesh in the place of the Spirit,' and thine own folly and darkness above the wisdom and light of the Mighty God? I see it: thou feelest complacency in these words, which are read on the entrance to this temple, 'HERE IS TO BE HAD THE FULL REMISSION OF ALL SINS,' and thou art desirous to persuade this ignorant multitude, whose souls thou art in the way of destroying, that it is true, telling them, that it is only here, in this temple reared by human hands, that they can meet with the God of tender mercies. But, spirit, unwise and altogether earthly, knowest thou not, that, whatever be the country that a soul inhabits, God is there, and compasses it about, as well

[1] Gal. iii. 1.

as in this place.[1] Should it be in one place in preference to all others, that He who made heaven and earth, should be near the heart that seeks him?

"Modern Samaritan, thinkest thou that it is here that men should worship, 'because thy fathers worshipped here before thee?'[2] What avails this antiquity, which flatters pride, if it be a mere superstition—a mere lie?[3] Or may it be, that to all this extent, thou art ignorant of the connection of salvation with the value of the blood of the Son of God, that thou countest that blood as an unholy thing,[4] preferring to it, or uniting with it, the merits of creatures, or, associating with the work of the Saviour, those of the Virgin, of angels, or of saints?

"Soul! still ignorant of the gift of God, could it be useless works, long pilgrimages, offerings, images, multitudes of prayers, or the decking out of the body, that should obtain the favour of God? Is it not to the heart that God looketh? And, is it not Christ, who once offered himself on the cross, the host, and the victim, a sacrifice that has made satisfaction through all eternity for the sins of all believers?[5]

[1] Discours de Zwingle. (Merle-d'Aubigné, Hist. de la Reformat. du dix-huitieme siècle, tome ii. 403.)

[2] John iv. 20.

[3] Conformité des Cérém. mod. avec les anc. ch. 12.

[4] Heb. x. 29.

[5] Zwingle, Opp. i. p. 263, apud Merle d'Aubigné, &c. p. 404.

"Thou speakest of the immaculate conception,[1] of the Virgin, of her resurreetion, and of her assumption to heaven, of her power, and of her intercession, to which thou joinest that of saints and angels, whom also thou desirest to be adored, honoured, and invoked! But why hast thou not read the Holy Scriptures, or even the authentic history of the Church of God, before proclaiming these superstitions,—these signal idolatries?

"If thou hadst done it, wouldst thou not have known, that an Ambrose, an Athanasius, an Epiphanius, condemn those who worship other servants of God? They declare, that adoration (of whatever kind) belongs neither to saints, nor angels, nor to the Virgin herself, but to God; and Augustine says, that all Catholic Christians worship not the dead, but God only.[2]

"But, above all, dost thou not know, (and may God give thee to believe it), that the word of the Most High pronounces a curse upon even the smallest religious honour, which man pays to any other than to God only, even were it in intention addressed to God? 'Thou shalt worship,' it says, 'the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Ye shall fear the Lord only, and serve him, and swear only

[1] On the perpetual virginity of the Mother of the Saviour, see Bost, Doctrine de l'Ecriture-Sainte sur le Culte de Marie. Paris, 1835.

[2] Scharp. De Eccles. Triumph. p. 1502. August. epist. 43.

by his name.'[1] 'I am the Lord,' says he to thee, 'and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images. Thou shalt not turn therefore to an idol, but shalt break it down and destroy its altar.'[2] This is what God says.

"I know you will reply, that these idols and images do not represent false deities, and that, besides, this homage, which thou renderest to the Virgin, and to angels and saints, is merely an inferior worship, but that thou renderest sovereign adoration to God only.

"But, who told thee that there are two kinds of adoration? Where seest thou it in the Bible? I see well enough among the pagans of ancient Rome, two or three degrees of adoration, as the gods of these idolaters were superior or inferior.[3] But the Book of God reprobates such a practice. Moreover, (and let attention be paid to it!) it is this very word *doulia*, as thou callest it, that is employed for the sovereign adoration, which is due to the Almighty, as thou mayest see in several places.[4] Thou oughtest

[1] Matt. v. 10. Deut. vi. 13.

[2] Is. xlii. 8, 17. Luke, xix. 4. Exod. xxxiv. 12–17.

[3] Cat. Conc. Trid. pars iii. c. 16. De Cultu et invoc. Sanct. Exposition de la doctr. de l'Egl. Cath. &c. art. 4. Bellarm. De Sanct. Beatit., lib. i. c. 12. Mars Ficinus, in arg. lib. i. et lib. viii. De lege.

[4] The Septuagint translate the Hebrew עבד, sometimes by λατρευειν, and sometimes by δουλευειν. In 1 Thes. i. 9, and Matt. vi. 24, δουλευειν is applied to the living God.

also to know, that one of these first Doctors, to whom thy Church listens, is forced to admit, that this double kind of adoration, of which thou speakest, has no support from Scripture;[1] and that another Doctor, of no meaner reputation, confesses that this distinction was altogether unknown to the Apostolic Fathers.[2]

"Abjure it, then, for it is not in the Book of God. But what is found there is thy condemnation. I there see two things that speak against thee: the one, that thou must not add to the words of the Lord, nor diminish from them;[3] the other, that there is a commandment which expressly pronounces a curse on all worshipping of images.—Hear it.

THE CHURCH OF ROME CONCEALS FROM THE PEOPLE

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT.

The Lord himself hath said "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the

[1] Bellarm. De Beatit. Sanct. lib. i. c. 12.
[2] Vasquez. Disp. xciii. in ili. part. c. 1. [3] Deut. xii. 32.

children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments."[1]

"Answer, priest of the Romish Church! What has thou made of this commandment? I find it neither in the catechisms of the people, nor in the instructions of thy Church. The child who learns thy catechism has not the idea of it at all. He does not know that God uttered it. Is he asked, which is the second commandment? he replies by repeating the third. The grown up man knows as little about it, as he has no suspicion that he is transgressing the law of God when he bows before an image.

"Thou sayest nothing of it to him in thy discourses; and if thy books speak of it, it is as it were in passing, and as an adjunct, (yet of no use) to the first commandment,[2] and which contains no other enactment. Or perhaps, by an unheard of interpretation, thou declarest, that the threatening at the end of the second commandment is a clause to be connected with every one of the ten.[3] I am well aware, however, that thou wilt tell me, that thy Church, notwithstanding, has the second commandment.

"But to begin. What shall I call that alteration

[1] Exod. xx. [2] Catech. Conc. Trid. pars. iii. c. 2. § 82.
[3] Catech. Conc. Const. pars. iii. c. 2. § 40.

of the seventh, (which thou makest the sixth) which forbids adultery,[1] and by which thou merely forbiddest wantonness?[2] Then, farther, what shall I say of the division of the tenth into two, where is first named the coveting one's neighbour's wife, and then in the second place, the coveting his goods?[3] Wouldst thou not have known, if thou hadst read the Scripture, that the tenth commandment is given in these words: 'Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.'[4]

"Thou shouldst know then, that a neighbour's wife, his man-servant, his maid servant, &c, are his house, that is to say, his goods or possessions; and that thus it is through a hardihood, or a subtilty, which God alone shall judge, that thou has changed the order of the words of the Lord, and separated what he hath joined together. But it is because one abyss draws another abyss along with it, and because it was necessary, in order that idols and images might enter thy Church, that the command-

[1] The Hebrew says לא תנאף; the Septuagint, Ου μοιχευσεις. (Exod. xx. 14. Matt. v. 27.)

[2] Abrégé du Catéchisme, &c., which is taught in the Romish Church at Geneva, p. 29.

[3] Ibid. p. 30.

[4] Exod. xx. 17.

ment which proscribes them, and which pronounces a curse on the service of them, should first of all be taken away; and a hand, which I venture not to characterise, has completed that work!

But the word of God is not the less immoveable, that thou tearest away a part of it, and pleadest against it; and that in showing the idol, which the workman hath made with the rule and the square, as a prophet says, or which he has formed under the hammer, and which he hath afterwards painted, or overlaid with gold, thou wouldst say, Behold such a saint, behold the Virgin, behold Jesus, behold the Holy Spirit, and even behold the eternal Father! Yes, continually that word of God cries aloud to thee, 'Woe! woe to idolatry! thine image teaches only a lie.'[1]

"And if, in spite of all this, thou sayest to me, that the Virgin Mary, the saints and angels, are worthy of being honoured, and that the Virgin especially, is highly exalted above every creature, and that in serving her we serve God through her, I will ask you again, how comest thou to know it?

"I see, according to Scripture, that all generations shall call her blessed;[2] and so I regard her as the most honoured of women. But if she had been

[1] Deut. iv. 15, 22. Isa. xl. 18; xli. 7; xlv. 9, Hab. ii. 18, 19.
[2] Luke i. 48.

without sin, as thou sayest, why should she have spoken of her Saviour?[1] and why should Jesus have chid her as having committed a fault?[2] And so far am I from seeing the apostolical church admit this immaculate conception of the Virgin, as thou callest it, that it is not till the twelfth century that I perceive the festival of it begin; and even then I hear the Abbe de Clairvaux, the eloquent Bernard, arise with indignation against that doctrine, "which," says he, "has neither been known in the usages of the Church, nor approved by reason, nor recommended by ancient tradition."

"'Honour the Virgin,' said this man of sincerity, 'but do it with judgment. She conceived by the Holy Ghost, but she was not conceived by him. She was a virgin when she brought forth her Son; but her mother was not so when she bore her. How then will you call a conception holy, which was not of the Holy Ghost—not to speak of its involving sin?

[1] Luke i. 47. Ἠγαλλίασε τὸ πνεῦμα μου ἐπὶ τῷ Θεῷ, τῷ Σωτῆρί μου. In the same company, which I formerly mentioned, (p. 125.) a physician asked me what positive passage I could allege against the immaculate conception of the Virgin. I quoted these words of the Virgin—"My soul rejoiceth in God my Saviour," remarking, that the soul which hath no sin cannot so much as think of a Saviour. The answer was considered satisfactory.

[2] John ii. 4. Chrysostom supposes that the mother of Jesus on that occasion, committed a fault of indiscretion, or perhaps of vain-glory. (Hom. in Joh. xx. t. ii. p. 132. Basn. p. 1091.)

This blessed one will delightedly dispense with an honour, which leads either to honour sin, or to introduce a false sanctity.'[1]

"Behold, priest of Rome, what thou shouldst know if thou hadst read merely the history of thine own Church. And thou shouldst know, also, that many Doctors, and five Popes in particular,[2] have thought and spoken like the wise Abbe de Clairvaux; and, finally, that if the Council of Bâle[3] decreed the truth of this fable, this Council was rejected by several others;[4] and that one Pope[5] at last terminated the difference by leaving every one free. What, then, is the use of this festival of the conception, which rests upon a manifest error? And how can he who fears the Lord impose upon the people a lie, under the pretext of serving God?

"I will tell thee quite enough, O thou master of human doctrines! concerning the assumption of the Virgin. Seek for it in Scripture; it is not there. Speak of it to the apostolical fathers; they know nothing about it, or what it is. Ask history what is

[1] Basn. liv. xviii. ch. 11. Pictet. Theol. Chret. liv. vi. ch. 8.

[2] Innocent II. Innocent III. Honorius III. Clement V. and Innocent V. (Pictet, ubi supra.)

[3] In 1439, Session xxxvi.

[4] The Dominicans on this occasion said that the Council of Bâle had brought forth a cockatrice.

[5] Sixtus IV., in 1476.

the origin of it, and it will tell thee the reveries of a monk, and then the edict of an emperor.[1] And it is on these that thou proppest thyself up to make the people believe an idolatrous fable!

"But I will say nothing more to thee on these fatal superstitions. What afflicts me above all, is to see thee despise Jesus Christ, and deny his divinity, by bringing down his work to the littleness and the defectiveness of the work of man—of the work of a creature. Oh thou, who dost not yet comprehend either the grace of the Father, or the incarnation of the Son, and the perfection of his work, or the sovereign efficacy of the Holy Spirit! tell me what wouldst thou have us make of the mediation or intercession of any creature whatever, or even of all creatures together, since it is God who hath saved, and God who intercedes? Has not the Holy Spirit declared, that he who, under the pretext of humility, would render worship to angels, intrudes into things which he understands not, and is rashly puffed up in his fleshly mind;[2] and, above all, that he does not hold the Head of the Church, the Lord Jesus.

Thou speakest of a monarch of this world, and thou sayest that, as one approaches him by ministers and inferior officers, so the Church approaches to the Father through the Son, and the Son through the Virgin, or angels, or saints. But why thinkest thou

[1] Charlemagne in the 8th century. [2] Col. ii. 18, 19.

that God should be like to sinful man, who is nothing but ignorance and weakness? If this earthly monarch, of whom thou speakest, were infinite, and knew all the hearts of his subjects, would not he himself know what passes in the bottom of mine? and would it be necessary for him to learn it by any other intellect than his own? And is it not precisely in this that thou dishonourest our Lord Jesus, and that thou robbest him of his omnipresence, or his omniscience, or his almighty power, or his goodness; that is to say, of his divinity; for if any of these attributes be wanting, is he God?

"Finally, what have these souls, which thou deceivest, these poor sheep without a shepherd, which thou art leading on to death—what have they to do, tell us, with the merits of the Virgin, or of saints, supposing them to have any, since the Lord Jesus hath saved his Church, since salvation is completed in him, since every soul who cometh to the Father by him is saved to the uttermost, and for ever.[1] Is access to the Father refused to the weakest, the meanest of these souls? No, no! So far from it, the Scripture says, that it has free access through Jesus, to the throne of mercy.[2] Or perhaps this soul is kept at a distance from the Saviour, in such a way that it cannot approach him with freedom.

"'Come to me,' says the Good Shepherd, 'all ye

[1] Heb. vii. 25. [2] Eph. ii. 8; iii. 12. Matt. xi. 28.

that labour and are heavy laden!' 'For,' adds an apostle, 'we have not an High Priest who cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, but one who was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.'[1]

"I adjure thee, therefore, before the Lord, who hath heard the words which thou hast just spoken, that thou assemble anew that multitude; that thou open before them the Holy Bible, and that by that word of truth, thou withdraw these persons out of the meshes of error, of superstition, and of idolatry, in which thou hast entangled them. Become a man of truth, then, and tell them that there is no other Mediator between God and them, (whether of redemption or of intercession. Oh! thou skilful to seduce! whence hast thou derived that subtile distinction?) but the Lord Jesus; that there is no merit, but in him alone, and that God alone hears our prayers; that the worship of angels is condemned by Scripture; that the second commandment does exist, and that it forbids and curses idols and images, and all worship that may be rendered to them; that these observances are those of paganism, engrafted upon the Church in times of darkness;[2] and that so, if

[1] Heb. iv. 15, 16.

[2] Conformités des Cérémonies, &c. ch. i. Daillé, Creance des Péres sur le fait des Images, lib. iii.

God be feared, if the Lord Jesus be acknowledged as God, the Saviour, and the testimony of the Holy Spirit be not despised; these souls should repent of their criminal superstitions, break their idols, reject their vain relics, cease to invoke creatures and the dead, and unreservedly to trust in the fulness of salvation, which is in Christ, and which every poor sinner possesses for ever through faith.

"Then, but only then, thou shalt see the life of God through the Spirit, replace in souls, the vain and apprehensive devotion of slavery. Then, instead of so many ordinances, utterly useless, except to rob the worshipper of the presence of his God, faith will be established in the heart, and through faith, holiness.

"Thus will pagan usages come to an end. This water of lustration, these wax candles, these singular vestments, these processions, these festivals, these patrons, these oratories, these altars, these ringings of bells, or soundings of trumpets, these Agnus Dei, these blessed breads, these rosaries, and so many other practices, all pagan, which never came into the mind of God,[1] and which turn away from Jesus Christ the carnal heart, which they amuse, or lead astray,—all will come to an end."

Ah! reader, how I should have wished that these words had been really pronounced by another priest

[1] Jer. vii. 31.

of Einsiedlen, by a second Zuinglius, in the abbey, and in the public square, and for days together! My feeble voice may, indeed, here and there, have uttered some words, and some souls may, perhaps, have attended to them. But what could it avail amid so many evils? But what splendour of light were needful to dissipate such deep darkness!

Reader, I have told you, and you have been able to see it: What results of life and holiness could I expect from principles, in which divine power was wanting? I ask you, once more then; can I believe, according to the Bible, that it is really to the Romish Church, that the administration of salvation has been entrusted, and that I ought to prepare to enter it?

THIRD ASPECT.

THE POSSESSION OF SALVATION, OR THE PEACE OF GOD AND HOLINESS.

WHAT, reader, is the worth of all else, compared with the blessings which I have just named? What is any Church to me, were she ever so ancient and venerated, and possessed of all the advantages of grandeur and prosperity, if in her my soul cannot

lay hold of salvation, nor enjoy the peace of God, nor serve him in love? What definitive answer, then, shall I give to the invitation I receive from the Church of Rome, if, having already discovered, as I have done, that she possesses neither divine antiquity, nor unity of divine faith, nor infallibility, and still less, permanence, I learn in the meantime from her doctrines, that in her I cannot assure myself of my salvation, nor rejoice in my God, nor render him the obedience of a filial love?

This, then, is the decisive point for me; for, and I cannot declare it too much, it is my salvation that it imports me to know and to possess; and if the Church of Rome cannot satisfy me in this, what has she to engage me to prefer her, or rather, what has she not to force me to get away from her?

It was always on that head, first in the middle age, then at the epoch of the Reformation, that the first, and sometimes the only reclamation was raised against the Romish Church. Sometimes from the depths of solitudes and convents, sometimes from the interior of a college, or the pulpit of a preacher, evangelical voices proceeded, which reproached the Church of Rome with her ignorance of the vital truths of the faith, or with the dark lessons by which she obscured the light of the Bible. Thus, from the first ages, there were churches without decoration, whether in the Appennines, or in the deep valleys of the Alps,

or in Illyria and Dalmatia, which preserved with the Bible, the truth of salvation by grace, and kept themselves separate from Rome.[1]

It was in the eighth century that the Venerable Bede, who, in Great Britain, in the north of Europe, taught that salvation is a gift of grace, and that man cannot merit it, opposed the Latin errors.[2] In the ninth century it was one Constantine who, by the simple reading of the gospel, having acquired the knowledge of salvation by grace, instructed and collected together, other believers, who, under the name of Paulicians, preached chiefly in Asia Minor, the way of the truth, free salvation, in spite of one hundred and fifty years of bloody persecution by the see of Rome. Their only book was the Bible, and their only doctrines, salvation by faith, and obedience in love.[3] There were, besides, an Agobard, archbishop of Lyons, and a Ratram, a monk of Corbie, who, following the steps of the learned Rabanus and Scotus of Erigena,[4] wrote against images and transubstantiation, and especially against right-

[1] Bost, Hist. Anc. et Mod. de l'Eglise des frères de Boheme et de Moravie, part i. liv. 1. Barth, Brief History of the Church of Christ, per ii. ch. 6.

[2] Hist. of the Ch. of Christ previous to the Reform. vol. iii. p. 96, &c.

[3] Ibid., cent ix. ch 2.

[4] In the eighth century.

eousness by works. Also, it was Claudius, bishop of Turin, whom history ought to have named as the first Reformer, who repelled all the Romish superstitions, and who preached powerfully salvation by faith in Jesus alone from the heart, without any human merit.

In the tenth century, there were an Adalbert, and especially a Theophylact, who maintained that man is justified by faith, and without any merit of his works.[2] In the eleventh century, the martyrs of the Bible, burnt alive at Orleans, by the Church of Rome, died, testifying for the truth of a free salvation; while in England, Anselm, a native of Piedmont, archbishop of Canterbury, drew the lamp of the gospel into the midst of the thickest night of error and superstition,[3] and repeated, salvation is by grace. In the twelfth century, the Abbe de Clairvaux; the austere Bernard, defended the basis of the faith, free justification, against the subtleties of Abelard.[4] And yet this same Bernard could not discern the true character of the Catharists, who, in Bohemia, in the environs of Cologne, in France, and other places, confessed in their "noble lesson," that

[1] Hist. of the Church, vol. iii. p. 159, &c. Milner, History of the Ch. of Christ, 1816, vol. iii. p. 211.

[2] Ibid. cent. x. ch. 4.

[3] Ibid. cent. xi. ch. 5. Milner, Hist. &c. vol. iii. p. 307.

[4] Milner, Hist. &c. p. 339.

man cannot merit salvation, and who cheerfully died by the sword, or in the funeral piles of the Romish Church, for this testimony of God.[1]

In the thirteenth century, it was not a voice here and there, nor some churches, thinly planted, but whole regions; nations, who in the valleys of the north of Italy, in France, and even in Spain, combatted for the Word of God, against the Romish doctrine of the *merit of works*, and who in thousands yielded their lives under the persecutions of the Church of Rome.[2]

At the same time, Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln in England, powerfully resisted the Popes, and the Romish doctrines, and multiplied his writings on the freeness of salvation without the works of man.[3] The fourteenth century opens, and the Lollards, then Wickliffe, Bradwardine, Thomas de la Mare, and "The Complaint of the Labourer," make the light of the Gospel to shine forth, and they are repelled or persecuted, or perish by the fire, for maintaining the "sole merits of the Saviour," in the salvation of the Church.[4] The fifteenth century begins with the

[1] Milner, cent. xii. ch. 2. Muston, Hist. des Vaudois, tome i. liv. ii. Hist. of the Ch. of Christ previous to the Reform. iii. 270.

[2] Fox's Universal History of Christian Martyrdom—Waldenses and Albigenses. Crespin. Hist. des Albigeois, &c.

[3] Hist. previous to the Reformation, vol. iv. p. 28.

[4] Milner, cent. xiv. Hist. of the Ch. previous to the Reform. cent. xiv.

lighting of funeral piles, in which the English Lollards left their mortal lives, while they celebrated the eternal life, which God gives freely by Jesus Christ. John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, sent up their souls to God, from the midst of the flames into which the Council of Constantine throws them; and after them, the *Unitas fratrum*, or United Brethren of Bohemia, are persecuted for the same testimony.[1]

At last the day of evangelical truth arrives for the first time, since the apostles, to its perfection, and justification freely by faith alone in Jesus, is published under the whole heavens, by Luther, Zuinglius, Brentius, Tyndal, Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, Bradford, Craig, Melancthon, Farel, Calvin, Beza, Knox, Bucer, Œcolampadius, Ballinger, Haller, and so many other friends of the Bible, who are all in the unity of the faith, in the infallibility of the faith, and in the perpetuity of the faith, because they are founded by the same Spirit on the same and only unity, which is the Word of God, and not on the doctrines or pretensions of a Church.[2]

This Word has not changed. It speaks at this day, as it did in the day of the prophets or apostles. And it is while I have it open before my eyes, that

[1] Hist. previous to the Reformation, vol. iv. p. 121, 154, 216, &c. Bost, Hist. Anc. et Mod. des Chret. de Boheme et de Moravie, 15me siècle.

[2] Merle-d'Aubigné, Hist de la Reform. du 18me siecle. La Preface.

I address the Church of Rome, and put to her this same question, which, for so many ages, my brethren have put to her,

HOW CAN I BE SAVED?

And it is according to this immutable word that I am going to examine her answer.

This question, reader, is perhaps that which has occasioned most discussions and disputes, not only between the Church of Rome, and other Churches; but between the different Doctors of the Romish Church themselves. To it belong the deepest points of theology: the decrees of God; the election of grace; effectual calling; the freedom of the will; regeneration; faith; justification and sanctification.

The measure of examination, which I follow out, requires me to ascertain, as the only point at present, whether, according to the Romish Church, salvation is entirely free, and obtained by faith alone; or whether man must in some respect merit it; and also in some respect atone for his sins by meritorious satisfactions. It is this last doctrine, which the Church of Rome affirms: She teaches the merit of works.

She properly says, that "in salvation all is grace;" she says also, "that man is justified by faith," and "that his sins will be freely forgiven by the divine mercy through Jesus Christ;" and so far she speaks exactly according to the Bible. But she adds, that

"eternal life is always a reward faithfully bestowed on the good works of man and on his merits, in virtue of the promise of grace, which is in Jesus Christ."[1]

She positively says, accordingly, that man must work out his salvation by the movements of his will, with the grace of God, which aids him, and, as a consequence, she uses the word *merit*, to denote the value, the price, and the dignity of these works, which man performs by the help of grace.[2] This doctrine is connected with two others equally important; the one, that he who is in possession of grace to-day, may fall from it to-morrow, and finally perish; the other, that man can never be certain of his salvation in this world. To these doctrines are joined those of Penance and Absolution from sin, and those also of Purgatory and Indulgences. It is to the examination of these that I must now apply myself.

VARIATIONS.

But before going farther, it is interesting to know, what were the sentiments of the apostolical Fathers, or even of the Romish Doctors, regarding the merit of works. Did they believe that faith in Jesus Christ is not sufficient to justify the sinner, but that a man's merits must be added to it? Their testimonies on

[1] Bossuet, Expos. de la Doct. de l'Egl. Cathol. Art. vi. et vii. Conc. Trid Sess. vi. c. 9 et 16.

[2] Ibid. Art. vii. § 2 et 3.

this point appear to me to be unanimous against the doctrine of the Romish Church.—Let us hear them:

"If thou believest," says Chrysostom, "what wouldst thou add to thy faith? as if faith alone was not sufficient to justify thee. It is the glory of the grace of God, to justify without works. The thief merely believed and he was justified!—Is it not a matter of wonder, that the man who is richest in works and virtues, is, after all, justified by faith only?"[1] "Christ has untied the knot," says Hilary, "which the law could not; for it is faith alone that justifies."[2] "It is in this," says Basil, "that we greatly rejoice in God, that we are justified by faith only in Jesus Christ, and not at all by our own righteousness. Eternal rest is the portion of those only, who have combatted here below, according to the established laws; not according to their merits; but only by the wonderful grace of God."[3] Ambrose is quite as positive, when he says, "Believers are justified by faith only, through the gift of God, without having done, or given any thing in return. It is faith, which hides the pitifulness of our works, and the weakness of our flesh."[4] "Whatever may have been the virtues of the Fathers," says Augustine, "they were saved only by faith. He who dies justified, continues to possess,

[1] Hom. 3, in Epist. ad Tit. Hom. de fide et lege Nat. In cap. iii. et iv. ad Rom.

[2] Can. 8. in Matt. [3] Homil. de Humil. In Psal. cxiv.

[4] Comm. in Rom. c. iii. lib. ii., de Jacob. et vita beati, c. 2.

not what the merit of his works has procured for him, but what he has received by grace. It is the catholic (universal) faith, and not works, which forms the distinction between the righteous and the unrighteous."[1] "It is faith alone," writes Theophylact, "that possesses in itself the power of justifying."[2] "Let him believe in thee, O God!" exclaims Bernard, "in thee, who justifiest the sinner, even him, who thirsteth after righteousness, and through faith alone will he obtain peace with thee. He hath given it to thee," says he to the believer, "and so it is twice freely given to thee: without thy merit and without thy work."[3]

"It is not of ourselves," writes Theodoret, "that we have believed, but the calling of God has made us approach him; and when we have done it, he hath not required of us the exhibition of purity and innocence; but he hath pardoned our sins through that faith alone which we have received."[4] And Gregory also said; "It is neither in our sadnesses nor in our works, but in our Advocate alone, that our trust is placed."[5]

Reader, are not these testimonies sufficient to replace the Holy Scriptures before us, and to prove to

[1] August. l. I., cont. duas epist. Pelag. c. 21. Item. lib. iii. c. 5. Qæst. lib. lxxxiii. 9. 76; apud Scharpium, p. 886.

[2] Comm. in Gal. c. iii.

[3] Serm. in Cant. Cantic. xxii. Serm. xiv. in Psal. xci.

[4] In Epist. ad. Eph. c. ii. [5] Hom. 7, in Ezek.

us at all times, in the most powerful manner, that never, in apostolical times, was the Romish doctrine of the merit of works avowed? So also was it never, no never, in the Church of God. Ever since there was on earth a revelation of eternal love to man, it was the language of grace that it spoke. From that time forward, the promise of the salvation, which is in Jesus Christ, was the object of faith, and merit was excluded from the thought and from the worship of the children of God.[1]

Abel was justified by faith, and not by works, which he had done. Enoch, Noah, Shem, Abraham, and all the patriarchs, walked by the same faith, founded on the same promise. When the law was promulgated, it was still to grace that it gave testimony; and David proclaimed it when he said, "blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered!" (Psal. xxxii.) Such is the faith of the elect. Such, from the beginning of the world, has been the doctrine of the Church of God, a doctrine which differs from that of the Church of Rome, as a gift is opposed to wages, and a gratuity to the discharge of a debt.

It is for this reason, that, when the present Romish Church speaks of her antiquity; when she says, for example, as she has just been doing, in such fine terms, in one of her mandamuses,[2] that "the man of

[1] See, Les Droits divins du Protestantisme, &c. p. 35, &c.

[2] Mandement de l'Archiveque de Paris, pour la carême de 1888.

faith contemplates her with transport, connecting himself with the first age of the world;" one cannot but compare her with the emperor Julian, who boasted of his apostolical creed, at the very time that he was rebuilding Jerusalem and her temple. No; it is not the merit of his works that is taught by Scripture. What it says of them is, that the man who rests on them in the least degree, makes shipwreck of the faith, that Christ shall profit him nothing, and that he is fallen from grace.[1] In this, as in every thing else, the word of God is divine, that is, complete, one, invariable, and refuses as much to acknowledge that man can have merit more or less, as that he helped in creating the world, or in directing the movements of the universe.

Yes, reader, the Bible here shews itself to be intractable. The chastity[2] of the spouse of Christ is her faith in the sovereign grace of God. When she loses sight of that grace, and turns her eyes to the merit of her works, immediately she is accused of adultery; and it is for this reason, that the charity, which gives merit to the works of man, and assigns a reward to them, is called by the same name as the woman who prostitutes herself. Let this great principle, then, be ever before our eyes: "Salvation is by grace

[1] Gal. v.

[2] Musculus, Loci comm. tit. xxx. 379. Rev. xvii. 1.

through faith; and that not of man, nor of his works, lest he should glory." (Eph. ii. 8, 9.)

Let every soul, then, that fears the Lord, and wishes to obey him, be filled with horror at any other doctrine than this, that Jesus is a perfect Saviour, and not merely a help. Let him who thinks seriously, and who, believing that after death comes the judgment of God, wishes to escape the condemnation which sin deserves, hear what the gospel of grace says, and that receiving it into his heart, he in fact has life. "God, who is rich in mercy, in the great love wherewith he hath loved us, hath at all times set forth Jesus Christ, a propitiatory sacrifice through faith in his blood, that whosoever believeth in him, should be justified before God, and that in the peace of salvation, he might rejoice in the assured hope of eternal life."

That is to say, reader, that Jesus is set by God before man, as the only and inexhaustible treasure of pardon and of life, and that the Holy Spirit says: Believe in him with the heart and thou art in possession of it. "Provided also that thou perform works;" adds the Church of Rome: "for if thou deny this, thou art cursed."[1] No! replies the Gospel, salvation is the gift of God; works are the consequence of it through the Spirit; and to say that they are a condition of it, is to lie and to perish.

[1] Conc. Trid. sess. vi., can. 9.

It is in this way, says the Gospel, that, on the one hand, a soul never has reason to keep at a distance from Jesus, because it is deficient in merits; and that, on the other hand, whilst by faith it has received its pardon with the peace of God, it cannot glory in it, since it has not merited the blessings by any work or virtue of its own, and that if it glory, it must be only in the Lord, and in his inexhaustible love.

And if you ask, reader, whence comes, on the part of the Romish Church, such a formal opposition of doctrine, on a subject that appears so simple, here is the answer!—"The Roman Church does not consider the death of the Lord Jesus as having been the expiation, total, absolute, and eternal, of the sins of the Church."—But here she substitutes two errors.

1. The first of them is, that the Saviour died for the whole human race generally, and for every individual, as well as for all collectively.[1]

2. The second error is, that his death was rather an authentic testimony of the truth of his doctrine, and of the prophecies of the Old Testament, than a satisfaction offered to the justice of God's law.[2]

The result is, that this Church does not see that the soul, for which the Son of God was sacrificed and became a curse, has been completely redeemed by him; and that consequently it is contradictory to

[1] Bellarm. de Missa, lib. ii. c. 2.

[2] Bellarm. de Christi anima, lib. iv. c. 8.

admit that that soul had ever any thing to do, or to merit, in order that its redemption might take place, since that has been perfectly accomplished by a Saviour sacrificed for it.

And by this error we may see once more, that the divinity of the Lord Jesus is not, in fact, recognized by the Church of Rome; since it is evident that God's works, like himself, must be perfect. But the work of Christ has not been perfect or complete, if it be necessary that the sinner, in order to be saved, must add something to it: in this then the Saviour is not God; since his work is not perfect.

The Church of Rome does not see this consequence; for she is loud in professing her belief in the absolute divinity of the Saviour. But this profession is contradicted by this particular doctrine, since there she considers salvation as not being accomplished by Jesus, but in so far as some willingness, or disposition, or merit, shall be added to and co-operate with grace. This assertion will become still more decisive, when we come to examine the subject of Absolution, when speaking of Penance.

This moment I hear the Church of Rome tell me, "that I must believe, under the pain of an anathema,[1] that my works of obedience, (though by the grace of God in me,) concur with grace itself, that I

[1] Conc. Trid. Sess. iv. can. 26. Bossuet, Exposition, &c. art. vii.

may hope for salvation; that I cannot be justified, but in so far as my heart is prepared to keep the commandments of God, and that the weight of my sins cannot be removed from me by faith, till after the sacrament of Penance has first removed them."[1]

But I reply to her, that this is a desolating doctrine, and that it appears to me to be as far removed from the revelation of the love of God in Christ, as the law of Sinai is from the Gospel; at the same time, that in my eyes, it dishonours God,—yes, it dishonours him. For where are the love, the power, and the glory of the Father, if he has given me in Christ only an incomplete salvation? Where is there in Christ, the perfect love, the sovereign power, the victory over Satan, if he has redeemed me only in part? Where is the creating and perpetual efficacy of the Holy Spirit, if it is to my weakness and my own works that there is left, were it even one single thing? And not only does this doctrine dishonour the Lord, but it has the most desolating effect upon my own heart. For what repose can I ever know, if, in order to possess it, I must merit it? Where shall I get what I must have, that I may be worthy before God! And where shall I find even the first inclination to goodness, since I am dead in sin, though the Church of Rome pretends the con-

[1] Catech. Conc. Trid. pars. iii. c. i. a. 15, nota. Ibid. pars. iv. c. 14, a. 26, nota.

trary ?[1] If, then, God requires of me, were it the least thing, say the lifting of one of my fingers, how shall I do it by my own strength, or how shall I ever be certain that I have lifted it precisely to the prescribed height? And seeing the law of God is perfect, how shall a *nearly* stand before it? And if, instead of this small matter, it be an immense thing that the law requires of me: If it be to "love God with my whole heart," and "my neighbour as myself," alas! what is to become of me, since (though the Council of Trent curses me for what I am going to say,[2]) it is impossible for me ever to attain to this height of obedience?

ASSURANCE OF SALVATION.

Never, then, shall I be able to know whether God has definitely pardoned me, and whether I can thus call him my Father, without fearing that he will give me the lie! Is it then for this, that I hear the terrible decision of the Council of Trent:—"If any one say that the man, who is regenerated and justified, is certain, through faith, to be numbered with the elect, let him be anathema."[3]

Anathema! Cursed! when the Scripture pro-

[1] Conc. Trid. Sess. vi. can. 4. [2] Ibid. can. 18.
[3] Sess. vi. can. 15, 16. Bellarm. de Justif. lib. v. c. 3, 4, &c.

nounces a blessing! Anathema! when the word of grace says to me, "I have written these things unto you, even to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life!" Anathema! when the Saviour says, with his own lips, "Verily, verily, he who believeth in me, hath eternal life, and he shall never come into condemnation!"

Ah! what then am I to make of that sweet and certain efficacy of the Spirit of adoption, which testifies with my spirit, that I am a child of God, and by which I call God my Father?[1] What must I do with that prayer, which my Saviour hath taught me, and which begins with these words of confidence and certainty: "My Father, who art in heaven?" Must I farther give the lie to the apostles, who tell me, that, "Now am I a child of God, that I should glory in my Saviour, and rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, receiving the end of my faith, even the salvation of my soul."[2]

VARIATIONS.

Must I, in fine, bring home a charge of falsehood against all the faithful, who have seen in Scripture, and who have possessed in themselves, that assur-

[1] Rom. viii. 15, 16.

[2] 1 John iii. 2. 1 Cor. i. 31. Rom. v. 2. 1 Pet. i. 8.

ance, which the Church of Rome anathematises; and, in particular, must I condemn the Fathers, who teach it me?

Is it not Cyprian who says to me, "What is the meaning of that anxiety, of these doubts, and of that sadness? If thou hast faith, art thou not righteous? and if thou art righteous, dost thou not also live by faith, and oughtest thou not to believe, that thou shalt be with Christ, and so lay hold on the promise of God?" And afterwards, "What! hath God promised thee immortality, and art thou doubtful, and undecided? To act thus, is not to have known God; and it is to make Christ the minister of sin; it is to have but a tottering faith, even in the house of faith."[1]

Is it not Chrysostom, who farther says to me, "Why cast thyself down and fear, as if thou hadst not for security, the boundless love of thy God? Hath his grace toward thee any limit or bound?"[2] Is it not Ambrose, who adds, "What God hath promised to his dear children, he wishes also that his dear children should possess."[3] And in what terms does Augustine come to confirm and comfort me? "All thy sins shall be forgiven thee," says he to me; "therefore, take not thy stand on thy works, but on the grace of Christ. Here, then, there is no

[1] Serm. de Mort. iv.

[2] In v. cap. Epist. ad Rom.

[3] Epist. ad Rom c. v.

presumption: it is faith. To make known what one has received is not pride: it is devotion. Why, then, should thou speak with trembling of a thing, of which thou art not permitted to doubt."[1] And farther, is it not Tertullian, who says to me, "Faith is a full certainty of salvation."[2] And, is it for nothing that Hilary says these words to me—"If faith is wavering, and hopes only with trembling for the kingdom, which is in Jesus, where then is justification?"[3] And, is it in fear that Gregory Nazianzen exclaims, "Who is he that doubts whether he be converted, or whether he repents, and who thus abandons the blessing? As for myself, I have demonstration that I am so, and I give my testimony that the divine clemency is certain."[4] Finally, is it not even a Doctor of the Church of Rome, Bernard, the Abbé of Clairvaux, who says to me, "There are three things, on which all my hope rests; the love of adoption, the truth of the promise, and the power of redemption. But in the meantime, what a foolish thought murmurs within me, and says to me, 'What arrogance is this? Who art thou that thou shouldst rest any hopes on thy merits?' . . . As for me, I know in whom I have believed; that he hath adopted me, that he speaks truth, and that he

[1] De Verbo Dom. Serm. xxviii. in Ps. lxxxviii.
[2] In libro de Bapt.
[3] In cap. v. Matt.
[4] In Orat. cons. de Calam.

is powerful. There is that triple cord, which is not easily broken," &c.[1]

Tell me, reader, can I deny the Scriptures? Can I give the lie to these testimonies? Yet, this is what the Church of Rome requires of me, when she says, "Come to me!" I cannot, then, gratify her; for you see that, in order to do it, I must silence the voice of the grace of my God; must contradict the Spirit of adoption, which speaks in my heart, and must cease to pray as my Saviour teaches me, and must tell the Apostolical Church, that she has believed a lie.

FINAL PERSEVERANCE.

Nor yet is this all; for a new anathema is heard against "him who shall say, that the believer cannot perish, and that the man who is justified, is assured of being so for ever, and of never falling from grace."[2] Now, it is against the Spirit of the Lord himself, that this malediction is directed; for it is he who tells Zion, "to rejoice with great joy, not to be afraid, and to strengthen herself in her God, who hath espoused her infirm bonds, and will never divorce her, and who hath loved her with all his heart, and with all his soul."[3] A curse is pronounced, then,

[1] De frag. Sept. Miser. Sermo, iii., apud Scharpium, p. 838.
[2] Conc. Trid. Sess. vi. Bellarm. De Justif. lib. iii. c. 14.
[3] Jer. xxxii. 40. Hos. ii. 19. Is. xlix. lii. &c.

by the Church of Rome, against that Spirit who hath said, that the believing soul is sealed by him to the final day of redemption; that God, who has begun in it a good work, is faithful; and that he will carry it on to the day of Christ; that he, who hath given for it Jesus Christ, will, with him, give it all things; that none shall be able to pluck it out of the hands of the Good Shepherd, its Redeemer; that neither law nor judge can establish any accusation against it; and that it ought to be assured, "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate the believer from the love which God hath shewn him in Christ Jesus, his Lord."[1]

Such, then, is the Good News. It is not a half salvation, which it announces to sinful man: it is grace complete, in its substance, which is the life of God; in its extent, which is the love of God; and in its duration, which is the omnipotence and eternity of God. And, not only is this grace revealed by the Word, but, moreover, it is sealed and certified by the Holy Spirit, accompanying the deep, the unutterable, and altogether heavenly feeling of the peace of God, and the assured hope of coming glory.

[1] Eph. i. 14. Phil. i. 6. 1 Cor. i. 8. Rom. viii. 31. John x. 28, 29. Rom. viii. 32–38.

VARIATIONS.

This, also, is what the Apostolical Church hath seen in Scripture, and it is this that she professes. Cyprian tells us, that the good grain is not blown out of the fanners, and that the storm does not tear up the tree that is firmly rooted; also those, whom the tempest or the whirlwind carries away from the Church, are those souls, which the Apostle reprobates, when he says, "They went out from us, but they were not of us."[1] "What!" says Ambrose, "could the Father withdraw his grace from those whom he has once adopted? Could Jesus Christ condemn him, whom he hath redeemed, and to whom, by his death, he hath imparted life!"[2]

"It is not with the things of God," says Chrysostom, "as with the things of men. If a king of this world loses his kingdom, and if death take him away from it: still nothing can take from you the riches of grace," &c.[3] And what says Augustine, he who presents us with a whole book on the perseverance of the saints? "The faith of the elect," says he, "never fails; or if it become weak, it is re-established before the end of terrestrial life. Also those

[1] De Unit. Eccl. Epist. 55, ad Cornel. apud Pictet, Theol. Chr. liv. ii. p. 27.

[2] De Jac. et Vita beata, lib. i.

[3] In cap. v. Epist. ad Rom.

who do not persevere, have never been separated from the mass of the human race by the election of God. For the saints, who are predestinated to the possession of the kingdom, are not only called to persevere, but, moreover, they receive the gift of perseverance," &c.

It is not, then, in equivocal terms, that the Fathers have professed the belief, that the Christian cannot fall from grace, or salvation. Regarding the hypocrite, they have spoken of him as the Scripture does, which says, that the door shall be shut against him, and that his portion shall be with the liars. But regarding the believer, it is, you see, reader, with promises, multiplied and sure, that the Word of God confirms and comforts him, and it is he by whose blood he has been redeemed, who says to him, "I am able to keep that which thou hast committed unto me, and to give thee the crown of righteousness, which is reserved for them who love my appearing."[1]

What loss, then, must I sustain, were I to enter the Church of Rome! For I cannot present myself to her, if I be anathema, and to avoid being so, I must renounce all that now constitutes the life, the repose, and the hope of my soul! I must cease to believe that my God loves me, that Jesus is my Redeemer, that the Spirit of God is with me,—in a word, that the Bible is true. That is, I must apos-

[1] 2 Tim. i. 12; iv. 8.

tatize from the faith as I have learned it, and, instead of being justified, as I am by it, I again become a condemned sinner; that from being adopted in Christ, as I am by it, I am nothing more than a slave of the law; that from being a citizen of heaven, and, in hope, an heir of glory, and a joint-heir with Jesus Christ,[1] I am, at the best, a miserable mortal, perhaps agreeable to God, perhaps accursed, and who, at any rate, not only cannot find, or permit myself for a moment to find joy in my Saviour, or a single tribute of thanksgiving for my salvation, to the Father,[2] but who, by humiliation and obedience to the Church, must prepare myself first to make satisfaction for my sins here below, by painful observances, then to descend for a time, of longer or shorter duration, into an intermediate hell, there to expiate such of my faults, as I may not in this world have effaced by my virtues!

Oh, what a frightful exchange! My whole being revolts at it. My understanding disavows it; for the Bible shows me the falsehood of it. My heart revolts at it; for, to yield to it, I must detach myself from the Saviour. My soul repels it; for the Spirit of adoption and of hope prevents me from thinking of it, and even my body shudders at it; because what it discloses is affliction in the present, and torments in the future.

I cannot, then, no, I cannot consent to what the

[1] 2 Tim. iii. 4. [2] Rom. viii. 17. Col. i. 12.

Church of Rome asks of me, regarding the possession of my salvation, She offers it me, in the midst of doubts, and under the condition of my efforts, of my works, and of my merits.

But,

God has given me it freely in Jesus Christ. Glory be to God for it! And for me, peace and joy by his Spirit! She tells me that my obediences and my sacrifices will perhaps obtain for me some reward.

But,

God has given me all in Christ. Hallelujah! Yes, his Spirit teaches me to do through love, the works which he commands me, as his dear child, adopted in Christ, and for eternity. Finally, she tells me, that if I persevere, and die in a state of grace, I shall not be damned.

But,

God tells me that there is no *if* in my salvation,—that certainly his love will not change,—that his gifts and calling are without repentance,—and that, as he has foreknown me in the election of his grace in Jesus, as he has called me with an effectual calling, by his word and Spirit, and as he has justified me freely by faith, he will certainly sanctify me also, and finally bring me into his eternal kingdom, and glorify me there.[1]

[1] James i. 17. 1 Pet. i. 5, 6, &c. Rom. xi. 29; viii. 28-38. 2 Thess ii. 1. Jude, 24.

It is impossible, then, that I can comply with Rome! No, I cannot exchange my peace and my lively hope for the doubts and the despair, which my own works must produce.[1] No, Jesus is too precious to my heart, to detach it from him! What said I? Ah! it is not I that guard it! It is he himself, who hath loved me, and who will always love me! Yes, it is an eternal union that subsists between the Good Shepherd and his sheep! . . . . If the Roman Church, then, wishes me to be with her, it is necessary,—I see it, and I tell it her,—it is necessary, that she come also, and cast herself into the bosom of Jesus.

PENANCE.

Presumptuous assurance! says that Church to me, in reply. Mournful illusion, which will end only in the most tremendous condemnation! Carnal security, which reposes on a pardon, altogether imaginary, which no holiness hath merited, and which apostolical absolution hath not ratified in the Church!

That is to say, reader, the Church of Rome declares, "that as we cannot participate in the merits of Christ's satisfaction, but in so far as we participate in his sufferings; it is necessary, before enjoying the

[1] Turret. De Necess. Secess. disp. i. § 38.

peace of God, and the benefit of the absolution of our sins, that we ourselves here below have satisfied the demands of the law, by making reparation for the injury, which our sins have done to God.[1]

And this includes many things, both regarding the nature of sin, and the nature of repentance, and, above all, regarding the right of forgiving sins, which the Church of Rome claims. I shall not enter into the interior of this "profundity," where souls are tied down with chains, which the Word of God alone can lighten, as it alone can break them. I limit myself to a thing that is clear and manifest.

To begin,—You have heard this assertion, which gives the lie to the whole gospel of grace, and to all the consoling declarations made by the Holy Spirit to believers. "Thou canst not," says the Church of Rome to me, "participate in the merits of Christ's satisfaction, but in so far as thou shalt have first participated in his sufferings."

Thus, accordingly, while, in his infinite love, the Son of God, having taken our sins upon him, endured in himself, the eternal suffering, which they had merited in the eye of the law, and while he was thus "wounded for my transgressions, and bruised for my iniquities; forsaken of God, abandoned and pierced," says Zechariah, "with the sword of the

[1] Abrégé du Catéch. &c. leçon 44. Bellarm. De Sacram. lib. ii. c. 28. De Pœnit. lib. i. c. 10. Catech. Conc. Trid. pars. ii. De Pœnit. Sacram. Conc. Trid. sess. xiv.

Lord,"[1]—all these sorrows and sufferings, and this sacrifice of the soul and of the body of the Son of God, were nothing, were merely ideal, were conditional, or, if I may say it, aerial! So, then, this agony, this bloody sweat, and this excruciating death of the cross, were at that time, without any reference whatever to my soul, for which Christ ought not to have suffered, or done any thing at all, till that I, in the futurity of ages, had first made satisfaction, to make way for his satisfying as the second; and, in fine, by my work, to render his death useful for my salvation!!

What sort of philosophy is this, where the efficient cause of an effect does not become such, till its object has passed away, through an accident which comes forth of itself? What sort of logic is this, in which the benefactor says to the miserable, whom he wishes to succour, Yesterday I cancelled your debt, and that completely; nevertheless, it will not be paid, till you have thanked me for it.

It is replied, But if the benefit be conditional, is it not necessary, in order to its taking place, that the condition precede it? Yes, doubtless. But in that case the benefactor must not say, I cancelled your debt yesterday. Let him then say, I will cancel it, if you do what I require of you.

If, then, the Bible has said, Christ shall be wound-

[1] Isa. liii. 5. Zech. xiii. 7.

ed for your transgressions, and bruised for your iniquities, after you shall have participated in his sufferings, then I understand what the Church of Rome teaches, and I say with her, that in point of fact, it is necessary that I myself satisfy the law, before I participate in the benefit of Christ's death.

But if, as the very opposite of all this, the Bible says, that Christ hath been made a curse for me, and that the chastisement of my peace hath been laid upon him,[1] that so these are things that are already done, how would you have me to see a future condition set upon a redemption, already completed, and to give another name than that of madness, to the obligation wished to be imposed upon me, to merit the doing of that, which has been already done; or to perform something, which shall give to this redemption, already wrought out and terminated, its effective power—its reality?

Surely, if the Son of God, in his unspeakable love, deigned himself to suffer, what I, a poor sinner, ought to have suffered, I may ask, is there any defect in that suffering? If he was really willing, in order to save me from hell, to descend into it himself, drinking to the dregs, the cup of the curse of the law, has he not, in fact, known the bitterness of it? or is it merely in a figure, that he has said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death?" or when he

[1] Gal. iii. 13. Isa. liii. 5.

exclaimed, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" And if, finally, as it is written, "he rose again for my justification," is it only to the half that my soul has been raised again, and justified in him, in God's decree? Is not the supposing it otherwise, the taking away from that work all its reality, and considering it, upon the whole, as certain heretics have done, a mere phantasm and figure.[1]

For this reason, while, according to his eternal grace, God has drawn me to Jesus, has revealed to me his love in him, and given me to believe with the heart in this Almighty Saviour, that it was not in these days, that Christ redeemed me. It has been done already. But at that time, God made me know it; at that time, God made me believe it; at that time, God effectually justified me, by imputing to me by faith, (hear it, reader of the Romish Church!) the whole work of Jesus Christ; and, consequently, the whole satisfaction which he, our Saviour, and not assistant, rendered to the law, in the room of his people, and for them.

At that time, then, I saw, and believed that "I have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of my sins, according to the riches of his grace, who hath freely pardoned all my offences, and who hath blotted out the handwriting that was against

[1] They were called Aphtarthodocetæ. Niceph. (815), lib xviii. c. 29.

me; and that so Jesus hath by himself purged me from my sins, from which he hath washed me by his own precious blood, having taken them all upon himself."[1]

But if I am told that the question is about eternal punishment, and that as to temporal punishment, that must be cleared off by myself, and that this is one of the procedures of God's love; Scripture opposes it, when it says, that even my body is the temple of the Spirit of adoption,—I say, day by day, to my Father, "Forgive me, as I forgive."[3] It is then his pardon, and by no means either my alms, or my prayers, or my fastings,[4] or my austerities, or my macerations, that take away my sins, because Christ hath satisfied for me, in every way, and without reservation.

My debt, then, was paid by a generous friend; but I did not know it. That friend gave me to know it; and at that time only, but yet at that time, I was put in possession of all that his love had already done for me.

Such is the salvation, which Jesus Christ hath wrought out by himself for his Church. And you

[1] Eph. i. 6, 7. Col. ii. 14. Heb. i. 2. Rev. i. 5. 1 Pet. ii. 24. Isa. liii. 10.

[2] Exposition, &c. art. viii. Abrégé du Catéch. &c. leçon 44.

[3] 1 Cor. vi. 19. Rom. viii. 9. Matt. vi. 12.

[4] Catech. Conc. Trid. art. 86, &c. De Pœnit. Abrégé du Catéch. leçon 44.

see, reader, that the remark formerly made, is here confirmed, namely, that all these doctrines of the Romish Church, which go away from the truth of grace, have for their principle, this fundamental error, that Jesus Christ has not effectually expiated the sins of the Church, by his death; but that he shall have done it only in so far as the Church shall first and foremost make satisfaction for a portion of the debt. What reasoning! What defective understanding of the gift of God; or rather, what a denial of the Saviour's sacrifice!

And it is thus, that, confessing the eternal divinity of the Son of God, and combatting the Unitarians, who deny it, the Church of Rome holds regarding the Saviour's death, precisely the doctrine of the Unitarian school. How true is it, then, that the plant of error puts on different appearances, but that whatever be its colours or form, it has always its root in the same soil, which is that of the righteousness of man's works, instead of the righteousness of God by faith.

"Nevertheless," replies the Church of Rome, "it was a Council that decreed these doctrines. Now, was not the Holy Spirit in the midst of these Doctors?"

The Holy Spirit in the Council of Trent!! . . . But, (to be done with this too famous Assembly,) who does not know, in what way this Council was convoked, and how it was directed? Did not one of

the Cardinals, complain in it, that "all was there decreed according to the will of the Pope's legates?" And was it not of this Council, that the saying went abroad, which then became a proverb, "The Holy Spirit, which presides over the Council of Trent, is regularly sent from Rome in a saddle-bag."[1]

Let us for once, then, let alone these vain, and often culpable human authorities, and let our minds submit themselves, and adore, when the Oracles of God speak! And since they demonstrate the error, (ah! let us rather say, the heresy!) of this doctrine, that the sinner must make satisfaction for his own sins, before he can enjoy the efficacy of the Saviour's merits. . . . Let their decision suffice us!

Let it suffice also to show what are the other doctrines involved in Penance, and which I am now to consider.

CONTRITION, AURICULAR CONFESSION, ABSOLUTION.

What more pressing want can there be to a soul, which loves God by his grace, than that of pouring out his feelings before him? How sweet is it to deposit in the bosom of the Lord, both her desires and

[1] De Necess. Secess. disp. v. § 39.

her pains, as well as her joys; to humble herself in his paternal presence; to confess her faults to him, under the influence of filial fear, and to have recourse with confidence, to the riches of that pardon, which is purchased for her in Jesus Christ."[1]

Is not that the secret teaching of the Spirit of adoption, by whom the believer is sealed; and is it not also the example given in the Church, by all the sincere servants of the Lord? "They shall confess their iniquities," saith the Lord, "according to the sins which they have committed against me, and then will I remember my covenant." "I have said, I will confess my transgressions," said David. "Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin."[2]

But how remote is this filial sorrow from that which would produce in me the fear of punishment! What a distance there is between that evangelical contrition, in which the soul, that loves the Saviour, afflicts itself as a child, in its mother's bosom, and that contrition, of which the Church of Rome speaks to me, and in which, as the Council of Trent will have it, grief is united to the fear of hell, or simply to the feeling of having lost the grace of God, and being less beloved by him![3]

[1] Musculus, Lieux Comm. tit. xxiv. De la Repentance.

[2] Lev. xxvi. 40, &c. Psal. xxxii. 5.

[3] Conc. Trid. sess. xiv. Catech. Conc. Trid. pars ii. De Pœnit. a. 30, &c. Abrégé du Catéch. &c. leçon 39. Bellarm. De Pœnit. lib. ii. c. 3.

Ah! if the pain which sin causes in me, is not that of having offended my Father, and if it be a judge, that it shows me in my God, where is my faith in his promise, and what support does my heart then seek in Jesus Christ?[1]

What shall I say, then, of the kind of confession which the Church of Rome enjoins me to make, alone, in private, to my priest, and which is such, that, if I fail to do it, I must be excluded the temple, and even be deprived of Christian burial.[2] Still, if this confession were the spontaneous outpouring of my heart, into the discreet and faithful bosom of a minister of the Lord;—but I must, "without reserve, and in their necessary detail, make known all the sins, which the Lord alone hath seen," that whatever be my sex, or my age, and that of the priest, and whatever obligations my domestic or civil position may impose upon me, I must tell him "the number, the relapses, the circumstances, the causes, and the consequences;"[3]—that I thus unveil to a man quite as much tempted, and as frail as myself, thoughts, desires, actions, practices, the very mention of which dishonours my soul, and of which the

[1] Musculus, Lieux Comm. tit. xxiv. De la Repent.

[2] Decret du Pope Innocent III. Conc. Latr. sess. xiii. c. 7, et sess. xiv. c. 5, 6.

[3] Abrégé du Catéch. &c. leçon 41. Catech. Conc. Trid. De Pœnit. Sacram. art 54, &c.

recital may farther corrupt, and at the same time seduce him who listens to me !

What a snare spread out for covetousness, and so many other criminal passions ![1] And, moreover, and above all, what usurpation of authority over the sanctuary of my conscience, where man comes to claim the right, and take the place of my God, who alone can say to his creatures, " It is I, it is I, who search the heart, and try the reins."[2]

Did the Lord ever think that man should seek in man for the light, which can exist only in the eye of the Mighty God ? If he says to his children, " Confess your faults one to another ;" at the same time that he says, " Pray one for another,"[3] and if he thus invites them to make known reciprocally what they may have on their hearts, and this, that the bonds of love may abide in all their strength ; where does he say to them, that a sheep of the Lord Jesus, shall go to the servant and his shepherd, to ask him to grant a pardon, which the heavenly Legislator alone promises and dispenses ?[4]

Where will you find, I ask, in the whole writings of the apostles, a single fact, a single allusion, that bears any relation to it ? Are not the duties of pastors detailed there ? Why, then, is there not a word said of that which, were it divine, would be one of the most important ? They declare, indeed, and fre-

[1] Musculus, De la Confess. Auric. tit. xxiv.
[2] Jer. xvii. 10. [3] James v. 16. [4] James iv. 12.

quently, that God forgives and pardons the sins of believers, who repent; but when do they say that he has charged the ministers of the word, either to take cognizance of these sins, or afterwards to remit them?

VARIATIONS.

Ah! if the Word of the Lord had been the foundation of this practice, would it have produced in the very Church, where it is in vigour, so many differences of opinion, and so many debates? If the Fathers and the Doctors have spoken of public confession before the Church, of public faults, and all this according to the injunction of the apostle, to rebuke publicly those who sin publicly, that others may fear,[1] have they so much as named the other confession? And even after that, in the thirteenth century only, it had been decreed by a Pope,[2] what opposition did it encounter, on the part, for instance, of a Michael of Boulogne, general of the Carmelites; of a Semeca; of a Peter of Osma, a theologian of Salamanca; and, above all, of Cardinal Cajetan, who did not hesitate to say, that "the necessity of confession is founded neither on the commandments of God, nor of the Church, nor on natural law, nor on reason."[3]

[1] 1 Tim. v. 20.
[2] Innocent III. in 1215. Conc. Gall. p. 239.
[3] Theol. Chret. liv. xv. ch. 37.

ABSOLUTION.

But it is doubtless late in the Church of Rome to reply, by reminding me of the duty imposed upon her leaders, and also of the right, which they have received of the Lord Jesus, to remit their sins to believers, which they cannot do, says the Church, unless they know them. Then, says she, confession is a matter of necessity for absolution, which is a commandment of Jesus Christ.[1]

The Roman Church tells me, accordingly, that, "if being sincerely contrite for all my sins, I have humbly, and without reserve, confessed them to a priest, he, in the name of Jesus Christ, will pronounce my absolution, that is, the sentence, which will remit my sins, of which I shall be internally absolved by the invisible Pontiff of the Church, while the priest exercises his visible ministry."[2]

VARIATIONS.

But such was not the creed of the apostolical Church.

She believed assuredly, that, when the Lord Jesus

[1] Catech. Conc. Trid. xix. &c. De Penit. Conc. Trid. sess. xiv. c. 4.

[2] Bossuet, Exposition, art. 9. Abrégé du Catéch, &c. leçon 43. Catech. Conc. Trid. lxxi. De Pœnit. Sacr.

breathed on the apostles, saying, "Receive the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained;"[1] he gave a commission to declare in his name, and by his word, the way of salvation, announcing pardon, as also denouncing condemnation, in the terms of the Gospel; and that this same charge should be imposed by the same word, and in the same terms, on those whom the Lord placed in the Church, after the apostles, as ministers of his Gospel, and pastors of his flocks.

But this primitive Church did not suppose, and did not admit, that the Lord would have established on earth a tribunal and judges, to whom his power would have been transmitted, and who, in his name, would have pronounced, or refused to pronounce, the sentence of Heaven's absolution; and here follow some of the proofs of it.

"I do not say to thee," says Chrysostom, "that thou shouldst parade thy sins, and accuse thyself, but that thou shouldst obey the prophet, who says to thee, 'Discover thy way unto the Lord.' Confess thy sins to God. Let this judgment take place without witnesses. Let none but God see thy confession."[2]

[1] John xx. 22, 23.

[2] In Ps. l. Hom. 31, in Epist. ad Hebr. Homil. de Pœnit. Basileæ, 1558.

Cyprian, speaking of the charitable office of the ministers of the Word, with souls which have fallen into sin, paints them, not as conferring absolution from the sins; but as leading these souls to the knowledge of their faults, and seeking the pardon of them from the Lord.[1]

Jerome, explaining these words of the Saviour to Peter, "I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," remarks, that there are bishops and priests who, imitating the Pharisees, suppose that they have the power to condemn, or absolve. Then he adds, "As under the Levitical law, the priest declared that the leper was, or was not healed, so now the bishop, or priest, binds or looses, according to what he knows, and according to the Word." Augustine expresses himself particularly in this matter, with much precision. "It is the Holy Spirit," says he, "that remits sin, and man cannot do it; for he himself has quite as much need of the Physician, as the sinner who comes to him in quest of him."[2]

Also, that it may be distinctly felt that this judicial seat, which the Church of Rome arranges, and where she says, by the mouth of the priest, "I absolve thee," is not of divine institution, the Greek Church, and with her all the Churches of the East,

[1] Epist. lxxv. [2] Homel. 23.

merely utter a prayer, asking of God, "that he would be pleased to absolve the believing penitent." The Gallican Church has proceeded in the same way. An ancient liturgy contains these words:—"May God Almighty have pity upon thee, and may he pardon thee!" And Peter the Lombard, in the twelfth century, remarks, that "the priests have merely the power of showing that the sins have been bound or loosed, by the word of Jesus Christ."[1]

It was in the same sense that Ferus, a cordelier priest, understood it, when he said, that "all that the priest ought to do is to say to the believing penitent, 'I announce to thee, that God is propitious to thee in Jesus Christ: I certify to thee, that thy sins are forgiven thee.' What is it that the priest does then," adds he, "but preach the gospel? but say to the sinner, that God pardons him in his Son?" &c.[2]

Again, I hear Pope Adrian VI. employ the same language, and quote several Doctors, who judge as he does: and yet the Council of Trent decrees, that "if any one say that the absolution which the priest gives, is not a judicial act, but merely a ministration, by which it is declared to the person

[1] Pictet, Theol. Chret. liv. xi. ch. 3.

[2] Ferus, apud Sixt. senens. i. Biblioth. p. annot. 45. Prosel. Evang. p. 184.

confessing, that his sins are forgiven him, let him be anathema."[1]

Oh! reader, what kind of ways are these, which turn away from what is written in the Book of the Lord! What complication, and at the same time, what darkness in a system, in which the grace of God in Christ being weakened, and made to occupy the second place, and human merit being put in its place, man must depend only on the law, on himself, and on his observances!

What a yoke is such a doctrine! What fatigue and weariness in all these precautions, and all these practices, which, even after having kept my soul far from Christ, far from the peace of God, and from the joy in the Holy Ghost, during the present life, leave to it, in the prospect of going out of this world, only a place of torment, where it must go to make satisfaction, by punishments, "from which the Saviour was not able, or was not willing, to redeem it!"

PURGATORY AND INDULGENCES.

I happened to be living for some time in a village of one of the Papal cantons of German Switzerland, and was desirous to make the acquaintance of the curate of the place. He was an old man of a

[1] Sess. xiv. c. 9.

singularly mild and venerable exterior. I found him in his library, where he received me with simplicity, but also in such a way as to make me understand, that his politeness was that of the heart.

I made myself known merely as a friend of the Bible, desirous to converse on its truths with those who believe them; and immediately we entered into conversation on the happiness derived from the knowledge of the love of God in Christ.

My venerable friend, (for he honoured me with that name from the first day onward), spoke with feeling. We were seated near a window, and the last tints of the setting sun lighted up a countenance evidently under emotion, on which sparkled some of those tears, that are never shed with regret.

"Allow me to ask you," said he to me, in an interested manner, toward the close of our conversation, "of what communion you are?" "You have seen it," replied I, smiling; "since I have the happiness of knowing the grace of God in Christ, I am a Christian." "I see so," replied the old man; "and I hope also, added he, sighing, "that I feel it. But pray are you .... a Protestant, or a .... Catholic?" "What!" replied I, laying hold of one of his hands, which I affectionately pressed, "is it not enough that I belong to Christ?" "Well," said he, "I am satisfied, and fully so, for this day. But come back again and see me; and if possible, every day."

The tie soon became intimate, and I was not long in seeing that this dear old man did not possess the peace, which I myself enjoyed, and that all he could reply to the question, "Is your soul saved?" was, "I hope so. For how," added he, "could I know it? Is there a single man, that has the right to be certain of it; and does not the Church pronounce an anathema against such an assurance?"[1] "It is notwithstanding," said I to him, "a good many years now, since that peace of God has been bestowed upon me. I do not think that any curse has come along with it." The old man sighed, and said to me in an under voice, "You are in a blessed state!"

This remark showed me, to my great joy, that this interesting man was not in a state of subjugation to the authority of his Church, since he appreciated as a blessing, what his Church condemns; and I cherish the hope of his partaking of that peace of God, which his soul desires. But I had to pass with him through all his ways, and numerous winding bye-paths, which he had followed for nearly fourscore years, and our first conversations had the character of little else than of skirmishes, which were preparing for the decisive day.

It was chiefly when walking into the country, that we conversed on heavenly things; and it was a most unexpected incident, that gave rise to one of the most serious and lengthened of our discussions.

[1] Conc. Trid. sess. vi. can. 15.

One day, as we had continued our course to a village, situate on a sloping mountain's side, at the moment we were about to enter it, we met a young girl, weeping and disconsolate, as she walked along. My friend asked her the cause of her sorrow, and she informed us that death had long ago deprived her of her father, and that her mother, whom she tenderly loved, had also died some months ago, "and," added she, sobbing, "I have not money enough to get a mass said for her."

"A mass!" said I to her; "and why a mass?" "Ah, my good Sir, to bring the soul of my good mother out of Purgatory." At these words, I saw a crimson blush pass over the face of my friend, who was evidently embarrassed. "You believe, then, my poor child," continued I, "that your money can do good to the soul of your mother?" "Not my money," said she, hanging her head, "but certainly the mass, which his reverence, the Vicar will say for her." "And what does a mass cost?" said I. "Twelve sous,[1] Sir; and I have not been able to scrape together more than eight, because I had to pay my little brother's school fees, and also new shoes for my aunt, in whose house I live." "Well, my dear child," said I to her, "point out to me where your dwelling is. I wish to pay you a visit; and I am

[1] Sixpence.

certain that I shall bring you something much more valuable than money." She showed me in a field, the cottage where she lived, and then left us.

"Is it possible," said I then to the old man, "that such things take place among you? and that money must be had to assist the souls, which have left this world?" He sighed, and answered but vaguely. He was absorbed and in a state of abstraction, and the rest of our walk was passed almost in silence. But as we were re-entering the village, taking me by the arm, and without saying any thing, he brought me into a chapel adjoining the Church, and whose walls I saw covered with pictures, and images, and *ex-votos*, or memorials of vows.

"It is here," said he, "that we shall speak of *Purgatory*. This is its chapel, and these pictures tell you what the church teaches on the subject." I expressed my surprise regarding the number, and also the costliness of these paintings; and he told me that it was an ancient and rich family in the parish, who, at different times, had brought them from Italy, and who had piously adorned this chapel with them. Here I begged the old man to explain to me the meaning of them, which he did in these words, and with feeling:

"This," as the great Bossuet says,[1] "is the only Jesus Christ, God and man together, who, by his infinite dignity, was able to offer to God a sufficient sa-

[1] Exposit. de la Doctr. de l'Egl. Cathol. art. 10.

tisfaction for our sins. But what superabundance of merit was there not in Him, who, by a single drop of his blood, would have redeemed ten thousand worlds! What merits, also, superabound in his holy and blessed mother, in that Virgin, whose glory fills the heavens! And, in fine, what merits do not farther superabound in these friends of God, in these saints, who, while on earth, by charitable satisfactions, which they were under no obligation to perform, have, conjointly with the blessed Virgin, and, above all, with Jesus Christ, laid up the heavenly and inexhaustible treasure of these Indulgences, which our holy Father, and with him, the Archbishops, and even the Bishops, dispense at their proper times, for the solace of the souls of the faithful!"

"But," said I to him, "for the solace of what? Is it of their sufferings, or of their trials?"

"It is true," replied the old man, "that I should have begun otherwise. Know, then, that the Church teaches, that, immediately on going out of this life, there takes place the particular judgment of all souls, who, according to their merits, are sent either into paradise, or into hell, or into Purgatory. The first are those of persons, on whom no sin remains. The second, those of persons who die in mortal sin; and the third, those of persons who, though they died in a state of grace, had not entirely made satisfaction for their
s. These last, then, go into Purgatory, there to
er a longer or shorter time in flames, which puri-
hem from the rest of the temporal pains, which are

due to their sins, for which they have not made complete satisfaction here below."[1]

"Are these then," said I, "the representations of this intermediate hell?"

"Call it not a hell," replied the old man, with severity of aspect. "In Purgatory, there is no curse. It is the tender love of God, as well as his most wise justice, which prepared this place, where, by the intervention of some temporary pain, (for eternal pain was entirely remitted to them at their baptism,)[2] these dear children are cleansed from every stain, and so are rendered worthy of heaven, whither nothing impure can enter."

"But," said I, "to me it appears that this very much resembles the notions of the heathens regarding the state of souls after death."

"That very thing proves to you," replied the old man, "that the light of truth has always had some sparklings in the heart of man.—But let us go on. Remark here these three large pictures, which together represent the entire of Purgatory, which is a very vast place, and situate, probably, in the centre of the earth. Some Doctors, also, have thought that the fires of volcanos are a kind of vent-holes to it.[3]

"But first, see here the hell, where, with the feeling of privation, souls have that of eternal pain.

[1] Abrégé du Catéch. &c. leçon 14. Concil. Trid, sess. xxv. Bellarm. de Purgat. Catech. Conc. Trid. pars i. c. 6, § 5.

[2] Bossuet, Exposit. § 8. Bellarm. de Purgat. lib. i. c. 14.

[3] Pictet. Theol. Chret. lib. xiii. ch. 7.

This place is on the outside of Purgatory.[1] The latter consists, 1st, of this division here, where souls suffer, and that severely, but where they have the feeling of only temporary pain; for they know how long they must suffer; 2dly, You see here the limbs of infants, where the fire of hell cannot enter, and where there is merely the privation of good, but without any feeling of pain. These children are there for eternity."[2]

"Those who invented this scheme," said I to him, with solemnity, "were not fathers of families. They had rejected the marriage, which God hath blessed. They have renounced its affections; and as to them, what matters it, whether little children be kept out of heaven or not?"—"You are very serious," said the old man to me; "but I understand you. . . . .

Without ending his sentence, he resumed, saying, "I say then finally; and 3dly, Here is the limbo, or prison of the patriarchs, that is, of the souls of believers, who died before the coming of Christ!—It was formerly quite full; but you see that, at present, it is quite empty, because the soul of Jesus Christ descended into it; and as St. Peter tells us,[3] brought

[1] Bellarm. de Purgat. lib. i. c. 6. [2] Scharp. p. 1992.

[3] "The meaning of Peter is, that Christ, in the person of Noah, preached to these spirits now in prison, and in the prison of hell, because they attended not to his preaching. The same interpretation throws light on what is said, p. 210, of Christ's descending into hell—which in our creed, means the *state of the dead*."—*Translator.*

out of it all the spirits, which, since the days of Noah, were imprisoned there."

"Here," said I to him, "are a good many things, which, I own, somewhat surprise me. Till now, I believed nothing but the Scripture, and it does not appear to me to contain what you have said, either on Indulgences, or on this Purgatory. Permit me also to remind you, that the Church of Christ has held no such notions."

"What is that you have said?" replied he with warmth, "even at the time of the first martyrs, it was their glorious privilege to obtain Indulgences."

VARIATIONS.

"It is true," replied I, "that in the first ages, when some excommunicated member of the Church felt the chastisement imposed on him too heavy, he addressed himself sometimes to one of the confessors of the faith, then in prison, or exile, entreating him to intercede for him, not with God, but merely with the Church, under whose discipline this punished member was placed; and that frequently, that Church, in consideration of the believer, who, in making the request, used indulgence, as it was then expressed, toward the chastised disciple, and received him more speedily into peace with the Church. This was unquestionably an abuse of discipline; but whatever there might be in that, what a difference was there

between this diminution of an infliction altogether arbitrary, and, last of all, human, and the indulgences of which you tell me, which have reference to infliction beyond this world; and, above all, which intrudes itself into the domain of God!"

"I allow," replied the old man, "that there is some difference here. The Church, however, has always recognised the institution of indulgences, and her love is thus wisely promoted, to solace here below those of her children, who, on their part, satisfy divine justice; and, in the invisible world, those who have rendered themselves worthy of it by their piety."[1]

"Meanwhile," said I to him, (resting, as authorities, upon the names of the Fathers and Doctors, whom I quoted,) "if the fantastical and superstitious Origen has put forth this doctrine, which he had received, I think, from the writings of Plato, and if some imaginations, similar to his own have reproduced it, must all this be regarded as the doctrines of the Church?

"Thus Clement of Alexandria, in the year 220, used this fine expression, regarding man's making satisfaction for his sins: 'Would that be a grace of God, which was not plenary; for when he imparts grace, is it not perfect and complete?' 'And who art thou, then,' says Tertullian, 'who wishest to imi-

[1] Clem. Alex. Pædag. lib. i. c. 6. Prosel. Evang. sect. 232.

tate God in forgiving sins? If thou hast no sin, pray suffer for me. But if thou art a sinner, how will the oil of thy little lamp suffice for thee and me?'[1] And what says Jerome? Oh! had the Romish Church heard and followed it, these pictures would never have been painted.

"'Every one,' says he, 'as an apostle declares, shall carry his own burden.' This short sentence, then, tells us, that, so long as we are in this world, we may help one another by our advice, and by our faithful prayers; but when once we are come to the tribunal of God, neither Job, nor Daniel, nor Noah,[2] can pray for any one, for every one bears his own burden.[3] If a person is to confide then in any one, let it be in God above; for it is written, 'Cursed be he that trusteth in man, were it even the greatest of the saints or prophets!'"

"'It is good,' says he again, 'not to trust in potentates or princes, and not only the princes of the world, but even the princes of the Church, who, if they are righteous, can deliver their own souls, and only them, and not those of even their sons or daughters.'

"So spoke the Fathers. And was it not also one of the Popes of the Romish Church, who wrote in one of his letters: 'The righteous have received

[1] Tertull. de Pudicit. c. 22. [2] Ezek. xiv. 20.
[3] Hieronym. in Gal. vi. et in Ezek. xiv.

crowns, but they have not given any; and from the strength of believers have gone forth examples of patience, but not gifts of righteousness. For all that concerns their death has terminated in themselves, and there never was one of them, whose death paid the debt of another man.'[1]

"Still more, dear Sir, was it not Cardinal Cajetan, who thus expressed himself regarding Indulgences: 'We have no certainty as to the origin of Indulgences; and we have no authority on the subject by writing, either in Holy Scripture, or the Fathers, or the Doctors, whether Greek or Latin.'[2]

"And again, what says he, in commenting on these words of the apostle Peter,[3] 'There shall be false doctors, or teachers, who, through avarice, shall make traffic of you by disguised words?' Here the old man, to whom I was speaking, heaved a deep sigh. 'Such,' said he, 'are those preachers, whose object is gain. For money they abuse the devotion of the Christian people, having the presumption to preach, that those who give a carlin or a ducat, (sighs anew from the old man), for what is called a plenary Indulgence, are in the same state as if they were newly baptized, and as if they were delivering a soul from Purgatory.' 'Such words,' adds he, 'are monstrous; and are a mere traffic of the Chris-

[1] Leo I. Epist. lxxxiii. ad Palæst. Pros. Evang. p. 214.
[2] Tract de Indulg. c. 2. [3] 2 Pet. ii. 1.

tian people. The Christian religion accordingly condemns them.'[1]

"Again, what says the celebrated scholastic, Gabriel Biel? Is it not he who declares that, 'till Pope Gregory VII., Indulgences were almost unknown.'[2] And does not Polydore Virgil acknowledge, that 'theologians have great difficulty in knowing for what purpose Indulgences have been established?'[3] And does not Archbishop Antonia say the same thing?[4]

"But, above all, let us hear what the Bishop of Rochester, that martyr of the Pope, says on the subject. 'Regarding indulgences,' says he, 'it is uncertain by whom they were instituted. Regarding Purgatory, there is no mention made of it by the ancients; even at this very day the Greek Church does not believe in it. The belief, either as to Indulgences, or Purgatory; was not necessary to the primitive Church. In proportion as people do not care about Purgatory; so do they not ask for Indulgences. Take away Purgatory, and you have no need of Indulgences.'"[5]

"Truly," said the aged Curate, as he walked straight forward into the chapel, "truly, if these things are

[1] In 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2.

[2] In eleventh century—In Can. Miss. lect. 57.

[3] De Inv. rer. lib. viii. c. 1.

[4] Anton. in Sum. pars i. tit. 10, c. 3. De Indulg.

[5] J. Fischer, art. Cont. Luth. Pros. Evang. sect. 233.

so, what is the use of these pictures? . . . And, above all, ... (heaving a deep and painful sigh,) what have I been teaching till this very day?"

"Who knows not, my much respected friend," said I, "that Indulgences originated, or at least, that they first took their place in the Church of Rome, in the time, and by the authority of Pope Urban II., who established and published them in favour of the crusaders, who went to re-conquer the Holy Land? Who knows not that Leo X., in order to procure the sums requisite for building the great church of St. Peter, published a Plenary Indulgence for every one that would help it with his purse? And, farther, who knows not, that having given the proceeds of the indulgences, that should be sold in Saxony, to his sister Magdelene, wife of Cibo, son of Pope Innocent VIII., this benefaction was confirmed by an Archbishop, who filled Germany with mendicant sellers of Indulgences, and that these people, in terms and by practices the most sacrilegious, selling them to rich and poor, to mighty and mean, carried off enormous sums up to the very day, in which the valiant servants of the Lord Jesus, Luther, in Saxony, and Zuinglius, in Switzerland, arose with doctrine and with intrepidity against these wickednesses!"

"Stop!" said the old man to me, as, with his hands all trembling, he laid hold of mine. "Be moderate, I pray you; for I am afraid of your profaning . . . . this holy chapel." These words died

away on his lips, and making a respectful inclination of the head, I resumed—

"Pardon me that indignant emotion. But how can I speak but under strong feeling, of doctrines and practices at once odious in their substance, and offensive to the word of God and to the merits of the Lord Jesus?"

"But, my friend," said he, "pray is it so with *Indulgences?* Are they not rather a benefit afforded by the Church to the souls of believers?"

"A benefit, say you!" I exclaimed. "Ah! that which is a benefit to a soul is to teach it what Jesus Christ hath done for his people; it is to inform it by the Word of God, that the blood of the Saviour, received by faith, cleanseth from all sin, be it mortal or venial, (though that is an imaginary distinction;) it is to repeat it over and over again that this glorious and mighty Saviour hath made satisfaction fully and for ever, for all the sins, past, present, and to come, of the Church which he hath loved; it is carefully to show to the soul, that the whole of Scripture bears this mighty and undeviating testimony."

"Yes, my venerable friend, what is a benefit to the people is to speak to them of the grace of God, of the Saviour's infinite love, and the infinite efficacy of his sacrifice; of the facility of salvation, which is a gift, quite open and quite accessible, from the love of the Father and his Son; and not a laborious enterprise, lengthened and impossible, to be accomplished by

man, and still by man, and always the work of pride and of the dignity of man.

"Here is the benefit, and the only thing that deserves the name. But as to the doctrine of Indulgences, and of that Purgatory, which forges them, and gives them currency; so long as the Bible shall continue to speak, it will tell me, that after death comes the judgment, and not a particular judgment; that when the believer dies, he is taken from evil, and not that he falls into it;—that then, what there is in him of mortal is swallowed up of life, and not by flames and sorrow;—that his spirit then returns to God, and not to chastisements;—that he departs from the body to be present with Christ, and not to be doomed to moan and groan afar off from him for ages;—that the death of God's children is precious in his sight, and not that it takes place under his indignation, even his paternal indignation;—that their Father does not remember their offences, and far less punishes them in flames and agony;—that then these dear children of God rest from their labours, and not that they begin more painful ones than ever;—that the crown is then given them by the Righteous Judge, and not that they are driven away by him into a frightful prison;—that their souls go to

[1] 1 Tim. ii. 5. Matt. xx. 28. 1 John iv. 10. 2 Cor. v. 20. Heb. x. 14. Col. ii. 14. John xix. 30. 1 Pet. ii. 23. Is. liii. 5. 1 John i. 7–9; ii. 1, 2. Rom. v. 10; viii. 1, 33. Heb. i. 3; ix. 34. Rev. vii. 14.

the place where are the spirits of the just made perfect;[1] and not that they go away to mourn far from the abode of their brethren.

"This is what the Bible says; and it adds, that their God, and Shepherd, and High Priest, who hath said to them, 'Ye are already clean through the word which I have spoken unto you,' has also said to them, that he was going to prepare mansions for them in Heaven, and not a Purgatory; that where he is, there they might be also; and that it was for this also that the martyr Stephen, at the moment that he was committing his soul to the Saviour, saw the Heavens opened, and not a flaming Purgatory;—that like him, all believers, on whom God is pleased to bestow it, know, and are certain, that after this world, their spirits are indissolubly united to Christ, and that it is impossible that their souls, which are sealed by the Spirit, should ever descend into a place of torment; for thither the Holy Spirit can never go.[2]

"No, no; it was not by feeble man, but by God Almighty, that Jesus saved his Church; and to imagine additional Satisfactions, Indulgences, or a

[1] Heb. ix. 27. Is. lvii. 1. 2 Cor. v. 4. Eccl. xii. 7. Phil. i. 23. Ps. cxvi. 15. Jer. xxxi. 34. Rev. xiv. 14. 2 Tim. iv. 8. Heb. xii. 23.

[2] John xv. 3.; xiv. 1–3; xvii. 24. Acts. vii. 56. Eph. i. 13, 14.

Purgatory, is distinctly to deny the Redeemer's divinity."

VARIATIONS.

"Also, respected friend, see what the Fathers of the Church have thought on the subject. 'After death,' says Justin Martyr, 'there is a separation between the good and the bad, and the first go to paradise.'[1]

"'The wicked,' says Irenæus, 'then go to eternal fire;' 'and the righteous,' says Cyprian, 'are called to the rest which is prepared for them.'[2] 'I believe,' says Gregory Nazianzen, 'that the souls of the good, delivered from their bonds, immediately enjoy unspeakable pleasure, and that full of joy, they wing their flight to God.'[3] 'I revolt at the thought,' says Cyril, 'that the souls of believers go to a place of torment; for it is written, that they shall for ever be with the Lord.'[4]

'When we shall quit this earth,' says Chrysostom, 'there will not be a moment, either to repent of our sins, or to wipe them away.'[5] 'He,' says Ambrose, 'who, on this side of the tomb, shall not have

[1] Quest. lxxv.
[2] Iren. lib. i. c, 2. Cyp. in Serm. de Mort.
[3] In Encom. Cæs.
[4] In Evang. John c. 36.
[5] Hom. 2, de Lazaro.

received the remission of his sins, shall not, on the other side of it, be received into the abode of the blessed.'[1]

"'There are only three places,' says Bernard, 'heaven, earth, and hell. Heaven contains the good only; on earth, there is a mixture of good and bad; in hell are only the iniquitous.'[2]

"Now, you must allow me, my respected friend, that the language of these Doctors on this subject, is much simpler, as well as stronger, than the imaginations, of which you have just spoken." "But," replied the old man, with a gesture indicative of grief, "if this be so, what then is the Church doing, when it enjoins these things upon us, and on the part of God? What is her intention? What then is the object or end of these doctrines?"

"Shall I wound you," replied I, "if I remind you of what we saw this morning, and which made your heart so keenly to suffer? You heard the moanings of that poor young woman, and what she said about the payment. . . . ."

"Ah!" cried the old man, passing his hand over his forehead, "let us not renew that scene. That money weighs heavy on my heart."

"But, my worthy friend, if your heart so feels it, how many are there who feel quite otherwise? Do

[1] De bono mortis, c. 2.

[2] In Sentent. c. 9. These references are taken from Scharpius, Cursus Theol. p. 2005.

you believe, for instance, that every bishop, or priest, who finds fault with the tax of the Roman chancery,[1] where it is fixed what one must pay for an Indulgence, or for a Dispensation, according to the sin, or the crime, which is to be remitted, or the duty to be dispensed with, and where all the iniquities which can be named under the sun, are specified, with their precise value in gold or silver, determined by the Pope with the assistance of the Sacred College.

"Forgive me, forgive, if I make you blush, for him whom you call the Holy Father; and if I declare that the College, which has determined how much money a parricide, or an adulterer, or an incestuous person, or one guilty of an unnatural crime, or of a rape, or a murderer, &c. &c. must give to rescue him from the punishment of his crime; and who has written, that he who has killed his father, shall pay four French crowns, but he who has killed an Abbé shall pay twenty-four,—must I tell you that such a College has never had the Holy Ghost presiding over it."

This conversation produced much emotion in the old curate. He went home quite pensive, and in parting, pointed to heaven, to which he directed his eyes, but he spake not. Next day (reader, I tell you what I saw and heard,) I found him in his library, with a Greek Testament open before him, and

[1] See them in detail in Wolf. Musculus, Lieuxcom. tit. xxi.

the Vulgate Latin beside it. "You are studying," said I to him, "the infallible Book?"

"Yes, my brother," replied he feelingly, "infallible indeed. And you see, I have resumed the Greek text. I read it formerly, but it is now a number of years since I have disused it. I wish to read it again. At fourscore years it is still time to return to the only book, that never leads astray."

Our conversation was prolonged on the simplicity, the sufficiency, the surpassing energy and majesty of the Word of the Lord; and in our walk we continued the same conversation. Then, on our return, (reader, I saw and heard it,) the old curate re-entered the chapel of Purgatory, and brandishing his cane, he said to me, in Latin, and with composure, yet with firmness, "Let us knock down these vain idols."[1]

"No," said I to him, "for your parishioners cannot as yet comprehend you; and these idols will rise higher than ever in their affections. But may God strengthen you, and enable you to employ the rest of your days in overturning error in these places, by the words of the Gospel, and so to withdraw from the meshes of ignorance, the souls, which, till this very hour, you have kept in them."

"May the Saviour assist me!" was the answer of this upright and pious man. We prayed together in his humble parsonage; and as I left him to see

[1] Hæc idola vanitatis detrudamus.

him no more in this world, he said, embracing me, "I say of thee before my God, 'Blessed be he who came unto me in the name of the Lord!' Adieu! The Almighty bless thee from his holy place! Adieu! May the Spirit of grace enrich thee more and more with the gifts of his Word!"

CONCLUSION.

Amen! said I, at the time, reader, and I now repeat it, and that with my whole soul. Yes, may God make me to know his word! And it is enough for me, if his Spirit subject my heart to it. You will have seen, by the examination, which I have concluded, that it was my desire, that that word should hold the first rank, and should singly decide every question.

There is no douht that this investigation is very incomplete, and I assure you, I am sensible of all its imperfection. That it might have been worth presenting to you, the subject should, in several points, have been treated more in detail. There are several articles, also, such as the authority of magistrates, the celibacy of priests, vows, distinction of meats, feasts and jubilees, the adoration and sign of the cross, and others of less importance, on which I have

not even touched, as I was afraid of wearying you. And notwithstanding these omissions, I suspect I may still be thought prolix.

But being obliged to publish very speedily, and to hasten my reply to a summons, I have not had "time to be shorter," as was said by an author, who knew what a book is. More than once, also, I have had to go back upon authorities, which were not all at hand, and so to quote passages from the Fathers, for instance, after other writings. I fear, then, that some errors in reference, or even terms, may be found in my pages.

Pray, Christian reader, excuse all this, and overlooking also my forward style, be pleased to attend merely to the foundation—the substance of the subject.

This substance is Jesus Christ. It is he alone. It is his perfect work, that should be manifested by this examination; as in the case of the mathematician, there is manifested just one single truth, but demonstrated, as proceeding from an accumulation of diverse calculations and connected proofs.

Jesus Christ, and the gift of eternal life, which is in him, is, accordingly, serious reader, the foundation and the result of this investigation, as it is also the pith of the conclusion, which you ought to draw from it. In him only is salvation; and it is for the revelation, the administration, and the possession of

that eternal salvation, that the Bible has been given to man, and that the Church of God appears on earth.

This Church is one. She is spiritual; and it is in her that the truth is. She contains and exhibits several compartments, and several forms, here below, amid a good deal of weakness, and even a mixture of error. I was happy and peaceful in that compartment, in which I was born, and in which I learned what salvation is. The Church of Rome came toward me, and told me that I had been seduced, and that to be saved, I must renounce my error, and enter into her bosom.

This summons required that I should examine the matter; and I have endeavoured to do it, by a research to determine whether the Church of Rome be really more conformable to the Word of God, than the Church, in which I have found peace. I have accordingly done it; and I am convinced, that the Church of Rome, such as she now is,

(First Aspect), Not only does not ascribe to the Holy Scriptures, the authority due to them; but,

(Second Aspect), That she does not possess, (1.) the unity of divine faith; nor, (2.) divine infallibility; nor, (3.) divine perpetuity, and still less, (4.) divine antiquity; and that, moreover,

(Third Aspect), She offers to the soul a merely equivocal salvation—a mere help, and not a Saviour;

and along with this, a multitude of ordinances and laws, which the Bible disavows.

Here is what I have seen; and I think also, in all sincerity, and without prejudice. I have seen, moreover, that the variations of the Romish Church, (her doubts, her uncertainties, her contradictions), are numerous on every subject, and that my mind finds nothing stable in her doctrines; and above all, I have seen, that Jesus Christ is not represented by the actual Church of Rome, either in his divinity, or in his undertakings and offices, or, especially in his character of Lamb of God, sacrificed for the redemption of the Church; that is, as the Propitiatory sacrifice; but that, on the contrary, beside him, and often in the place of this glorious Saviour, the Church of Rome exalts man, the dignity of man, the works and the merits of man; and that so, not only does she build on a foundation altogether different from that which the apostles laid, but farther, that she does it, as if it were for amusement, with the wood, the hay, and the stubble of the inventions and practices of men.

Here is what I have seen, and what I see, in all uprightness and good conscience before God. Therefore it is, that, after having carefully and particularly reviewed in my own soul, and under the inspection of the Eternal, the examination, which I have just made, I conclude, that, as it is true, that I believe the Bible in all that it says, and above all human doc-

trine; I am forbidden by that very Bible, to enter the Church of Rome, such as she now is.

May God, before whom I place this conclusion, and who, on the day, when we shall all appear before him, will demand an account of it, strengthen me, in the communion of his only and eternal Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Holy Spirit, who, with the Father and the Son, is one only God, blessed for ever, render me always more able to feel in my heart, and in sincerity and without weakness to say, "Thou art my portion, O Lord: I have said that I would keep thy words." (Ps. cxix. 57.)

Christian reader! it is for you now to judge whether my conclusion be conformable to the Scriptures. To you, also, be it given of God to "persevere unto the end," in the obedience of love, which our Father requires of us!

THE END.